

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

#### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + Refrain from automated querying Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

#### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at http://books.google.com/

J.1827

# HEAD-PIECES

AND

## TAIL-PIECES.

#### BY A TRAVELLING ARTIST.

"Of werres, of peace, of marriages,

Of rest, of labour, of voyages,

Of abode, of dethe, and of life,

Of love and hate, accord and strife,

Of loss, of love, and of winnings,

Of hele, of sickness, and lessings,

Of trust, of drede, of jealousy,

Of wit, of winning, and of folly."

Chauser's House of Fame



#### LONDON:

#### PUBLISHED BY CHARLES TILT,

ST. BRIDE'S AVENUE, FLEET STREET.

1826.

205.

# BUNGAY: STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY J. AND R. CHILDS.

## CONTENTS.

•							PAGE	
Introduction .		٠	•				v	
The Emigrant's Tale				• •			1	
The Scarf: or, Natural	Magic			•		•	29	
The Cast-away .	•					•	69	
The Guerilla Brothers							97	
The Way to Rise; or, The Cunninge Clerk .							116	
The Return							154	
The New-Year's Gift	•						184	
The Fisherman's Tale				•		,	196	
The Guardian							208	

### HEAD-PIECES

AND

#### TAIL-PIECES.

THE feelings and character of a rude people are reflected in their national ballads; but it is the novels of a more refined age which exhibit, in full relief, the peculiar features of the time. It is a matter of delicacy, to talk of the merits of one's own century; but, when the truly 'ample page' of our present romantic literature is unfolded to the eyes of that remote and shadowy personage, Posterity, his conclusions, we flatter ourselves, will be highly favourable to the wisdom of his ancestors. The praise of imagination we care less about; for imagination is a quality we despise on account of its consanguinity to falsehood.

Matters of fact have come into fashion; and the nearer a romance approaches to history, the better chance it has of being read. The time is gone by when we gazed on the bright mysterious moon, with feelings almost verging on idolatry, while we passed

the stilly night in inditing sonnets to her pale face. We now turn our eves towards that interesting planet for the purpose of tracing the course of her turnpike-roads. and the boundaries of her potatoe-fields. The world of romance is turned topsy-turvy. The mighty spirit of steam has laid for ever the whole host of inferior powers, whether haunters of the lake or the river; and Fairy-land, ever since it has been lighted with gas, shows as hare and dismakas the Mall in St. James's Park. But there are some minds, either naturally so opaque as to refuse all admission to the new light of science, or so obstinately wedded to ancient prejudices as to shut the eyes wilfully to its unwonted splendour. They still love to expatiate on the themes which delighted their youth, to lose themselves among the mysteries-mysteries to their blindness-of the world and of their own nature. They hate mathematical demonstrations, and look with suspicion on such things as must be subjected to the vulgar test of the senses. To the modern professors, who approach them with the square and the plummet, who analyse their arguments by means of the crucible, and pry into the secret recesses of their strongholds with the assistance of Sir Humphry Davy's lamp, they reply, generally, but with a shake of the head which is more eloquent than words.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

The writer of the following pages—such is the force of fashion—is almost ashamed of being subjected to

the suspicion of belonging to this proscribed minority, and yet he chooses to set out with confessing that he has not been altogether able to keep pace with the time.

Still some prejudices—if prejudices they be—cling around his spirit; still the visions of 'the days of other years' crowd upon his soul with a distinctness, which he can hardly term a mockery, of reality,—still he loves to listen, amidst the business of the world, to the far-off echoes of the sounds which once captivated his ear,

" And watch the dying notes, and start and smile!"

The benevolent reader, however, who may detect an air of obsolete antiquity in some of the pieces which are now presented to him, will perhaps look with more pity than anger on a fault to which he is himself so superior; and at all events he will laud the modesty which, in place of the full-sized pictures now in vogue among literary artists, has presumed to offer only a set of

" HEAD-PIECES AND TAIL-PIECES."

## EMIGRANT'S TALE

What hid st thou in thy treasure-caves and cells,
Thou hollow-sounding and mysterious main?
MRS. HEWARS.

It is a thing familiar to the experience of every one, how deep an influence impressions laid in early life possess over the future character and conduct; and we find nothing surprising or preternatural in the occurrence of events which may be regularly traced, by a chain of circumstances, to their first germ in the youthful mind. But when the catastrophe seems different from the ordinary course of human affairs, or when it happens unexpectedly, presenting suddenly something to our eyes which but a moment before was without the range of hope or of fear, the event becomes, to our startled imaginations, a mysterious judgment of good or

evil, and the idea with which our spirit was haunted so early, is termed a presentiment and a fatality. I do not presume to offer any opinion upon a subject so little understood—but to adepts in the occult moral sciences, the anecdote of my early life, which I am about to relate, will perhaps afford some materials for illustration, and it will be deemed the more valuable that it is literally true.

I was born in a little inland town, and had reached my seventeenth year before straying from the paternal home, beyond the limits of a holiday ramble. I had received from nature the dangerous gift of a strong imagination, an imagination of that sort which, when attended by equal strength of judgment, and fostered by proper cultivation, makes men poets and painters; it made me only a dreamer. The realities of life, which afford the true materials for poetry, were to me tasteless or disgusting; and even the external forms of nature, in their beauty and grandeur, I could behold with indifference, while my mind's eye was for ever fixed on scenes of my own creation. The country around was rich in fine scenery, and although not a fashionable resort for the hunters of the picturesque, many a traveller, while winding along the hills of ----, has paused in admiration at the uncommon beauty and diversity of the landscape. There was

one object, however, wanting to render it complete; there was not even a glimpse of the sea. I had never seen the sea; my eyes had never wandered over its vast and beautiful expanse; the voice of its mighty waters had never fallen on my soul. I despair of making any one comprehend me. If I dared attempt to personify the idea with which I was haunted, in order to render the nature of my feelings somewhat explicable to another, I would endeavour to conjure up before him a form of as awful but indistinct sublimity, as the vision of Eliphaz. It should follow him like his shadow, or walk before him like the pillar of cloud in the wilderness; its voice should be like the fitful and indefinite sounds of far-away music, which the ear strives in vain to combine into some intelligible harmony; it should fill him with involuntary terror. and yet with the most intense curiosity and longing. In attempting to trace back the feel-. ings with which the thoughts of this unseen object inspired me, to at least their human sources, I arrive at a period so early, that very little dependence can be placed on the struggles of memory; its utmost effort can only bring before me the indistinct form of an old man, and the echo of a harsh and deep voice, associated, I know not how, in the dreams of my infancy, with the subject I attempt so vainly to investigate.

This venerable personage, from what I have learnt, may be supposed to have been my maternal grandfather, if it can be believed that an infant, as I was when he died, could retain any remembrance at all of things or persons so remote. He had been a sailor, as the chronicles of our family relate, from his boyhood; he had passed many years in foreign countries, and suffered numberless hardships and vicissitudes of fortune; and at length, when age had compelled him to take a last farewell of the thankless element which he still loved, and left him like a wreck on the dry shore, abandoned by the retreating tide, it was to the piety of his son he owed an asylum for the few remaining years of his life. His arrival at my father's house was an event of some importance in their quiet family, and as he had hitherto stoutly resisted the anxious importunities of his friends, was altogether unexpected. After an absence of several years, he walked unannounced into the room where the family were sitting round their evening fire; "What cheer? what cheer?" said the old man, extending his hand to my father, and then abruptly placing himself in an elbow-chair by the fireside.

"God be praised! you are come at last, father!" said his son, with a trembling voice, as he looked earnestly into the care-worn and wea-

ther-beaten face before him, while my mother knelt down and put a cushion under the old sailor's feet. "Pshaw, pshaw, pshaw," repeated he-but the last seemed to stick in his throat, and his eyes looked as red and watery as if a north-wester was blowing in his face. But although he then attempted to carry the affair with an air of indifference, the proud spirit which had danced from boyhood over the ocean, seeming to imbibe a portion of its fierce and reckless independence, had received a deep wound. His only pleasure appeared to be in an attachment he speedily formed for my brother, who was a few years older than myself, at that time in the nurse's arms, and to him he delighted to tell the story of his venturous life, of the tempests he had weathered, his shipwrecks on a foreign shore, the strange customs and unholy rites he had witnessed.

"And of the savage lands and heights sublime They had swept by—whence haply some wild rhyme, On a still night, had stolen along the breeze, And to their bosom with its simple chime, Told amid lonely shores and desart seas, Of human hopes and fears, and kindred sympathies."

By degrees, however, his spirits sunk; his last story was told, his last glass run, and without any definite complaint, some years before nature seemed to have decreed the termination of his mortal voyage, the old sea-farer was safely moored in his long anchorage, where no storms could disturb him, and where the tide has neither ebb nor flow. His little favourite did not long survive him; and, in the common routine of human feelings, the remembrance of both was gradually lost in succeeding cares, and pleasures, and afflictions.

In giving what I intend to be a plain narrative of an event which happened in my youth, apparently connected, in some mysterious manner, with the long-continued and leading dream of a very wayward fancy, it would be unpardonable thus to dwell on circumstances so remote, and seemingly so irrelevant; but I would fain take hold on something real and tangible, amidst the chaos of wild and daring speculations in which I am bewildered, something capable of being grasped and examined by the human intellect, and made available in evidence to the judgment; and yet, though it is reasonable to suppose that the narratives of the old mariner may have partaken of the peculiarities of a bold and enthusiastic mind, overshadowed by unmerited misfortunes, and embittered by the remembrance of unavailing struggles, and that they may have formed, in some measure, the germ or the nucleus of my strange fancies, yet it would also be necessary to suppose that such

tales, falling on the ear of infancy, may enter into the apparently unconscious mind, give a lasting direction to the thoughts, and impart for ever a colouring to the embryo imagination. But let me proceed.—Mighty, indeed, and manifold, have been our intellectual conquests; but there is a boundary, over which we may not pass. There is an eternal voice sounding in our ears, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further!" We raise our eyes to heaven, and number the stars as they roll many millions of miles above our heads, distinguishing them in their separate orbits, and measuring their size and their distances; -we dig into the bowels of the earth, and drag forth the treasures of primeval nature, declaring at a glance their structure, their composition, and their properties; --- and without wings or other natural appliances we soar into the clouds, and look down on our mortal habitations; --- without lungs capable of inhaling water for an instant, we descend into the bottom of the deep, and remove the foundations of ocean from their places. The elements are our slaves; we realize in ourselves the fictions of romance; we are the fire kings, and water kings; spirits of earth, and spirits of air; but here ends our empire. We are lords of the physical world alone. We comprehend to a certain degree the machinery of the external universe, but when we look with-

in, when we struggle to form some conception of the simplest operation of our own mind, what a dwarf is this intellectual giant! If I could but pursue the idea that wanders across my fancy as easily as my eye follows yonder cloud passing over the brow of heaven, whose origin, nature, and destiny, I can so easily determine! But, again, let me proceed. I have only to relate a fact, which in a newspaper column would be comprised in half a dozen lines, among the daily occurrences. Something more, however, must be accorded to one so nearly, deeply interested: and yet, that more will seem strangely suited to the exordium; for I have to talk of gentleness and beauty, of hope and love, of all things that touch the young heart and warm the fancy. I will try to lay aside these unprofitable speculations, to forget every thing that may interrupt the stream of my little narrative, and live over again in memory, just as I then did, this short but memorable portion of my history.

Influenced by some reasons, which it is not of consequence to explain, a maiden lady came to reside in the neighbourhood, whose history, though probably not uncommon, was to me, at least, sufficiently interesting. She was a Scotchwoman, and, her parents having died early had resided some years with her brother, on a small patrimonial property, in Perthshire. Many years

older than herself, and a man of a melancholy, not to say gloomy disposition, there appeared to be little resemblance or sympathy between them, but the instinctive affections of nature overcome all things, and sometimes indeed seem to delight in contradictions. When, at length, his wife died, leaving one child, an infant in the arms; when he had suffered that loss. which Dr. Johnson characterizes as one "which lacerates the mind, and destroys the whole system of purposes and hopes; which leaves a dismal vacuity in life, that affords nothing on which the affections can fix, or to which endeavour may be directed," Mr. Hamilton sold his small property, and determined on emigrating to America. It was then that his sister became truly valuable; although, perhaps, he regarded her services merely as what he was naturally and justly entitled to. After her parents' death, with that self-devotion to family interests, which is one of the most striking traits in the national character, she had given up the brightest days of her youth to her brother, then the head of the humble and almost extinguished race; in joy or in sorrow, in health or in sickness, she was his nurse, his companion, and his servant, received the last sigh of his wife, and rendered to her the last services of affection and piety,-and now, when the survivor had resolved on leaving a spot filled only with painful recollections, she took up his infant in her arms, and forsaking friends and companions. all she knew, and all she loved, followed cheerfully the steps of his pilgrimage, into a far and foreign land. The spot pitched upon by the adventurers for their abiding place, was on the banks of a lonely river, far in the van of that march of civilization, which with gradual but certain pace is sweeping over the vast solitudes of the trans-atlantic world. Before them lay those unmeasured wilds, through which wandered the few and scanty tribes of the aboriginal inhabitants, scarcely leaving the print of human footsteps in their path; and behind was the busy world they had forsaken, too far off to be seen or heard-except in fancy, when sometimes the eyes of the emigrants turned backward to their lost home shaping out the morning mists, or the clouds of evening, into accustomed hills, and valleys, and streams. In this solitary abode nearly seventeen years were spent, when Mr. Hamilton died, leaving his sister and his daughter, now verging on womanhood, without friend or protector, in the wilderness. His sister had now fulfilled every duty which the ties of nature and the customs of her country required; death had severed the chain which linked her to the destinies of him whom she had loved and served

so devotedly. There was nothing now to bind her to a country, which even a residence of seventeen years had not taught her to consider as her home; and winding up as speedily as possible their little affairs, she returned with her brother's orphan to her native place, Scotland, There, however, she found herself a stranger. New faces, new families, new habits, were everywhere; the very face of nature appeared to be different, keeping pace with restless man in his continual changes. The once pure stream had been seduced into the contaminating circle of a manufactory, from whence its poisoned waters issued in black and sullen volumes; a noisy and dirty town had risen in the valley, and the house of her fathers, too unfashionable for the leaders of the new colony, had been pulled down, to make room for a more modern structure. whose whitewashed walls, and trim slated roof, were alike offensive to her Scottish and American prejudices. Short and melancholy was this pilgrimage to a shrine consecrated by so many tender and painful recollections; and she once more became a wanderer.

Chance, providence, destiny, no matter what, set her down within a short walk of my father's house. Like most persons who give themselves up to the indulgence of reverie, my habits and manners were shy and distant. I had few ac-

quaintances, and no intimate companions. La company I was a mere cypher, unregarding and unregarded; and although my father was a man of some consideration in the little circle around. my society was seldom courted. It was, therefore, not immediately on the arrival of the strangers, that I had an opportunity of seeing them. Their history, their manners, and appearance, were for some days the talk of the town. Wherever I went, the aunt and the niece were the objects of wonder, or praise, or censure; the former was so good or so proud; and the latter so beautiful or so vain! Then the singularities. real or fancied, in one who since the unconscious days of infancy had never looked on the manners and usages of civilized society; whose ideas of mankind had been formed in an American log-house, the pupil of nature, as they affectedly styled her, the child of the desert! What appeared awkwardness to some, in the eyes of others was wild grace; and one party blamed as boldness, what another termed unaffected frankness, in the looks that had been accustomed so long to rest only on the trees and mountains, and to seek the haunts of the panther in the wilderness without alarm. Only conceive what an interest all this must have excited in a breast like mine. I was just at the age when we begin to confer on the creatures of imagination a local

habitation and a name; when the indefinite visions that haunt us with a thought and a feeling of beauty, rather than any distinct impression of form or feature, resolve into their destined mould. It appears ridiculous to say that I loved before I saw her, and yet I cannot describe my feelings by any other word. It is more singular, that with all this depth of interest, curiosity, or whatever it may be termed, I rather avoided than sought the acquaintance of its object. I might have been introduced to her several days before I submitted to the ceremony-and mes that in this case I was kept back by the natural shyness of my disposition; for there was not the least of reserve in my feelings towards her, on the contrary it seemed to me that we were already acquainted; her very features were familiar to me; the tones of her voice fell like accustomed music on my ear. But why lengthen out into details, which must be uninteresting if not fatiguing, a narrative—that should already be drawing to a close! I cannot linger for ever on the first step of my journey. Yet it is not sufficient to say that at length we did meet, and that we leved with all the warmth and confidence peculiar to our age. There was something more, at least on my part; feelings which it is bardly possible to explain in words, and yet which some persons may comprehend, seemed to mingle with that sentiment so pure and beautiful in young hearts, unalloyed by the grossness of passion, and unchilled by the lessons of experience. She was not, in my eyes, merely a beautiful and amiable girl, whom nature taught me to love, and whom destiny seemed to point out as the companion of my life. I was happy-indeed exquisitely so, but my happiness was neither formed nor increased by those delightful anticipations, which make this period the brightest spot in the path of our pilgrimage, and to which, in after life, we recur so often, and so fondly. No dreams of domestic quiet-of parental and conjugal endearment-now associated in my fancy, with a name which Addison affirms to be the most beautiful sound in nature, the name of wife. Indeed it was not possible for those, even of the coldest imaginations, to have looked on her with precisely the same sentiments they might have felt for another. To be able to account for, or indeed to describe the peculiarity in her appearance and manner, it was absolutely necessary to be acquainted with her history. There is something in the aspect of the inhabitant of a mountainous or solitary district, which distinguishes him among his fellows in the crowded valley. His look wants the vivacity and quick intelligence which marks the intercourse of busy life; but there is in it a depth

of expression, contemplative, and approaching, according to the individual temperament, either to enthusiasm or depression, by which an accurate observer detects at a glance the denizen of the hills, whose companions have been the rock and the torrent, and whose eyes have been accustomed to wander, unannoved by the puny interruptions of art, over the mountainous solitudes of his own romantic region. This loneliness of aspect, united to features of the most feminine loveliness, the graceful freedom of her step and attitude, alike distant from rusticity and affectation, the peculiar tones of her voice, which even when the speaker was unseen arrested attention, and long after haunted the ear like a remembered tune, the singularity of her story, and her friendless, unprotected situation—all combined, excited a strange interest, totally different, and indeed in some measure inconsistent, with that commanded by mere beauty. This, I have said, even men of the coldest imaginations must have felt-to me there was something more. The idea of North America has ever been associated. in my mind, with a feeling of awe, intermingled with something amounting almost to fear. thought of its vast, almost interminable solitudes, -exhibiting no impress of human sovereignty, -where man himself is a stranger,-is accompanied, even to this day, with a thrilling sensation which I could not easily describe. Accustomed to live among men, and surrounded by the memorials of past generations, we do not, without effort, form a distinct idea of total solitude. Thus, in the imagination of childhood, darkness, when unpeopled by the real, tangible forms of our every-day experience, teems with the frightful creations of superstition; and the more lonely and mountainous regions, in proportion to the thinness of their human population, are made the abode of other and more mysterious beings.

Long before I had seen Marion, America was to me a land of dreams,—and she, so different from any one I had yet known, so light, so graceful, so beautiful, in her appearance and story so full of romantic interest, seemed at times only the brightest and most fantastic of them all. The loss of her father at the most sensitive period of life, a consciousness of her lonely, unprotected situation, and the solitary manner in which her youth had been passed, had given a cast of thought to her countenance approaching to pensiveness; but in moments of gaiety, and they were not unfrequent, the " rich and melancholy smile" which was habitual to her features, became lighted up with so sudden and vivid an expression, and her whole figure assumed so much buoyancy and elasticity, that she truly eeemed

A dancing shape, an image gay, To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I had never, till now, had a companion, at least in the more refined sense of the word. too was an enthusiast; and although not sharing in the extravagance of my feelings on certain subjects, could at least listen, without ridicule, to ideas I had hitherto confined to my own breast. The voyage between the two worlds, more particularly, was an inexhaustible theme. seen the sea. For weeks-months-she had been borne on its mighty bosom; the foam of its waters had dashed over her pale forehead, and her voice had mingled with its storms. Without being haunted herself, by any of the strange feelings associated in my mind with the idea of this object; her descriptions were yet well calculated to fix and deepen their impression. Her first view, in particular, of the "world of waters,"—the startling sensation with which, for the first time, she looked round in vain for the land—the sublimity of her fear when the winds had ceased, and the sounds of men had died away on the forsaken deck, and she felt herself alone under that clear cold sky, listening to the terrible silence of the midnight sea !-In the midst of our mutual happiness an event occurred, which it appeared probable would remove all impediments to our union; the death of a

distant relation in Scotland rendered Marion. very unexpectedly, what my friends termed a " suitable match." her want of fortune had for sometime been the only obstacle; and as my expectations rested solely on the pleasure of my father, it was a truly formidable one, more particularly as her aunt's pride, if not her own, would have certainly determined them to refuse an alliance that was not sanctioned by all parties. Now, however, that the balances of pride and property were adjusted, it was permitted to affection to take its course, and our wedding-day was fixed. It was necessary in the meantime, however, for Marion to take possession of her inheritance, and I being prevented by urgent affairs from accompanying her, it was arranged that she and her aunt should go alone to Scotland, the ceremony being to take place immediately on their return. In spite of my reluctance to part with my betrothed, even for a few weeks, it was necessary to submit; they set out on their journey, and in a few days, as she wrote to me. Marion felt her heart once more dancing on the waters, and turned her eyes tearfully towards the setting sun, which seemed to linger over the wild and solitary land, where her youth had glided on like a dream, and where her father was buried.

From time to time I received accounts of her

progress in settling the affairs, which formed the business of her journey; and at length the last letter that she was to write to me arrived, announcing that their departure from Scotland was fixed for the day after it was written. The packet, according to the usual calculation, would reach Elsford on the second day after I received this intelligence, from whence the ferry-boat conveys the passengers across in about an hour, the Firth being there only seven or eight miles broad. Up to this moment, I had not formed the slightest intention of going to meet the travellers; on the contrary, the business in which I was engaged seemed to preclude the possibility of my doing so, without sacrificing more than would have been warrantable under the circumstances. I had, however, no sooner read this letter than the thought took possession of my mind, that I would set out for Bourne, the point at which the ferry-boat arrives from the opposite shore. It was no wonder that I should wish to do so: it was but a common lover-like attention which Marion had probably a right to expect; but still I could not gratify my feelings without much inconvenience, both to my father and myself, and indeed without submitting to a delay of our marriage equivalent to the time I should be absent. It would besides be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to reach Bourne at the requisite

time, it being nearly two days' journey off, and how vexatious if we should chance to pass each other on the road! I felt that it was ridiculous to think of it. I was ashamed so much as to hint at the scheme to my father-and I went to bed that night resolving to remain patiently where I was. But I could not sleep. My thoughts were with Marion on the sea. I felt hot and feverish; every thing about me seemed unsteady; the dim beams of the moon admitted through the curtains flowed along the walls and the roof like waves chasing each other across the deep; I felt the bed undulate beneath me; the pillows raised my head sometimes so high, that I fancied myself in dread of falling, and then sunk so deep as to give me a feeling of suffocation. At length with a strong effort, I rose from my uneasy couch, and opened the window. I uncovered my burning bosom to the night air, and withdrawing the curtains, suffered the pale light of the moon to penetrate every corner of the apartment. not, however, altogether recover my composure. As the tedious night wore on, every new hour that was sounded by the house-clock struck more heavily on my heart; and at length, at the first break of morning, I dressed myself, and stealing quietly down the stair-case went out. purpose was, by walking briskly in the open air, to endeavour to dissipate the feverish dreams

which oppressed me; I had not the slightest idea of putting the scheme into execution which had occurred to me the day before; -- and yet I did not return! It was not surprising that my eyes and my steps should turn towards the north. I walked on without being sensible of the lapse of time; for the cool air of the morning had revived my spirits, and love and Marion warmed my heart. I now became elevated in proportion to my former depression. Marion still was on the sea-but sweeping over its sparkling bosom in pride and triumph; and my soul was filled with the grandeur of the picture without being awed by its terrors. The thought I had so resolutely dismissed came gradually back, and at length, although without viewing it in any more favourable light, without even attempting to convince myself that I was acting rationally, I determined to proceed to Bourne. I arrived at a yet early hour at ----, where I was fortunate enough to get a place in the mail coach which passes through that town, and having despatched a messenger home with-not an explanation of my absence,—but a confession of my headstrong folly, I soon found myself rattling along the north road. I travelled in this manner during the whole of that day and night, and at day-break the following morning was set down at a village, where the great road branches off in a westerly direction, and which is not many miles from Bourne. It was still so dark that I had much difficulty in passing along the rugged and hilly road I had to traverse; but I felt as if I could have scaled the Alps without fatigue; my spirits were exalted to the most extravagant pitch; I pressed forward as if existence depended on a moment, continuing to make the most violent muscular exertions, and yet feeling as if cramped and confined by the physical weakness of nature. This lasted for a considerable time. But the morning was dark, and the way was long and rugged; and as I approached the end of my journey, my strength and spirits began to flag. I was just on the eve of beholding for the first time an object, the idea of which had been attended almost from my infancy by so many contending and mysterious feelings; and as by degrees I came within the circle of its attraction, a thousand indescribable thoughts rushed at once into my mind, seeming to overwhelm and annihilate the very faculty of thinking. A cold repulsive air seemed to breathe from that dewy gulf which I felt was so near me; my blood waxed cold, and my limbs weak, till at length, when toiling up the side of the last intervening hill, the alacrity with which I had at first pursued my journey, and which had been gradually declining, entirely forsook me. A depression

as great as in that last dreary night at home, but devoid of any restlessness or anxieties, sunk over my spirits; and I stood still without the wish. and almost without the power, to go forward another step, wiping languidly heavy damps from my forehead. A change had come o'er " the spirit of my dream." When I did proceed the few remaining paces, and arrived at the summit of the hill, without curiosity-admiration-awe-terror-without even the slightest temporary excitation, I saw spread out before me the dark and seemingly interminable abyss. On the right hand was the inlet which Marion was to cross, its opposite shore as yet scarcely visible; but all around besides, the open sea. Not a sound disturbed the profound tranquillity of the hour, and not a motion could be perceived either in heaven or earth, except the silent mingling of huge masses of va-pour which swung over the bosom of the deep, like the elements of matter in the first chaos. I descended the hill, and dragged my weary and trembling limbs towards the village. Not a creature was stirring, all was profoundly silent, and the sound of my own footsteps on the smooth round stones jarred discordantly upon my feelings. I laid myself down on a rock at a little distance, to wait the coming of day, gazing vacantly on the changing mist as it rolled slowly away before the faint beams that begun to peep over the hills behind me, or watching with a listless eye the progress of the waters gliding noiselessly along the beach near my feet. It is strange, that notwithstanding the apathy in which my senses were buried during this interval, there is no portion of my life, the events of which, the thoughts, the appearances, in their most minute and insignificant details, I more distinctly remember. The gradual stealing of daylight over the dark sea-the face of the waters kindling up into smiles wherever the sunbeams fell, till the whole surface presented a blaze of light which it was almost painful to look on—the changes of the sky-the dark masses on the hills brought out into their respective forms of rock and hollow-every variety of tint-the minutest alterations of figure in the scenery or pictorial effect—are at this moment present to my recollection. I remember the first door that opened in the village, the first voice that saluted my ear, the first smoke that curled up in the clear air from the cottages; the deep voices of the men while going out to their labour on the beach, the softer tones of women, and the shrill cry of the children as they leapt up into a joyous consciousness of existence, their hearts as light and wholesome as the air, and their faces bright and happy like the morning. Then the awakening by degrees of

the still waters into sound and motion—their little undulations breaking into curling ripples at the brink with a musical but monotonous cadence—the light breeze springing up far sea-ward, as if by its own volition, and sweeping with its dark-blue traces over the glassy surface the stirring of the trees on the land—the louder and busier sounds of men as the morning advanced-the barking of dogs-the lowing of cattle—the tapping of the hammer on the hollow boats on the shore—not a sound escaped me. At length, rousing myself from my lethargy, I walked towards the houses, and joining a little group of idlers on the beach, found that the ferryboat was actually in sight, although to my unpractised eyes there appeared to be scarcely a speck upon the sea. In a short time it became distinctly visible, and we could see the sails hanging loose upon the mast, and the oars dipping into the calm water. By and by a light breeze sprung up, and the canvas was spread out to catch it. Shortly after the wind freshened, and became steady; the oars were entirely withdrawn, the sails trimmed, and in an instant the little vessel presented a spectacle beautiful and interesting even to the most callous; dashing gallantly through the resisting element, and shaking it in white sprays from her breast; now bending slowly under the breeze, and then re-

covering like a strong wrestler her place in the contest. The breeze, although moderate, was not perfectly favourable, and it was therefore a considerable time before the vessel by her sidelong approaches came near the shore; at one moment she would appear to be steadily pointing with the utmost precision to the very landing place, and then suddenly stretch far out into the sea, bending deeply under the fuller wind, and followed in her turn by the white foam which leaped upon her stern like a pursuing enemy. My apathy was now gone. Marion was on the sea; before my eyes; protected from the dreaded element only by a few fiail planks. I was a landsman; I had never before seen the sea; my superstitious terrors awoke, and were aggravated by my ignorance. My eyes were riveted to the vessel as by a spell; when she bent under the wind I felt that undefinable and most painful sensation which accompanies the falling down a precipice in the night-mare; and when she suddenly went round on her sea-ward tack, when I fondly hoped that but a few minutes more would end my anxiety, my very soul died within me. At last I could distinctly perceive my betrothed seated in the stern, and we exchanged signals of joy and congratulation. There were many others in the boat of both sexes, and as she neared the

beach their voices were loud and gay; we could hear the hoarse laughter of the men, and the playful shrieks of the village girls. When within a few oars length of the landing place the din increased, and jests and greetings were exchanged between the shore and the boat. "These madcaps will run her on the cross!" said an old villager who stood beside me, pointing to a heap of rocks rising above the surface a little way from the beach, and surmounted by a wooden beacon. At these words I darted forward, and raising my arms in a cautioning attitude, cried out to them to take care, but the words were lost in their laughter, and the gesture unnoticed by all except Marion; who, not having heard what I said, immediately rose, and with the light, firm step, that had bounded over the wilds of America, sprung across the planks, and in an instant stood on the prow. Her arms were stretched playfully towards me, love and happiness sparkled in her dark eyes -the boat struck on the cross-there was a plash in the water.—Blind, infatuated madman, I rushed in-far beyond my depth-seized on my Marion, when with admirable intrepidity she was just in the act of raising herself upon the rocks, and dragged her to the bottom!

The wind and the tide were both outward. I was saved almost by miracle—but she—O if the waves had but left me her corse! The sea has been known to give up its dead-new life has been breathed into the cold motionless forms that appeared to have been buried for ever in their watery grave. I would have clasped her in my arms-I know she would have heard my voice! I would have opened her heavy eyelids -I would have unclosed her dumb lips, and with the warm kisses of immortal love awakened her from the fearful trance of death! But I have done. The spell was broken, the predestined victim was offered up. I have, since then, been often on the sea-but with changed feelings. My way has been across its wildest path: my hand has been on its mane in its most terrible mood: I have traversed the wildest desarts of America, I have followed the footsteps of Marion to her favourite haunts, along the hills she loved when a child, and left-a sacrifice to destiny and me. And here in the very cottage where she lived from her infancy, I have sat down as in a continuing city, to rest from my wanderings until the hour comes when place and time shall be nothing.

## THE SCARF:

OR.

## NATURAL MAGIC.

THERE are few things in this world more pleasant than, after a separation of some years, to find one's legs under the same table with an ancient chum, a well-executed fire flinging the while its ruddy, good-humoured smile across the pale light of the wax, and a bottle of irreproachable claret voyaging with virtuous punctuality round the table. Far be the envious ear of wife from such tête-à-tête, sacred to the innocent reminiscences of youth; and far the insidious eyes of sister or daughter!

Sir James Ackfield thought he had never been so happy in his life, as during the volunteer visit of his early friend Ormond, of which it is my 'hint to speak.' They had been school-fellows, and what is more, camerados, during the interesting years which immediately succeed the tyranny It may thereof Quintus Horatius Flaccus. fore be supposed, that their topics for conversation were not easily exhausted. Very different however had been the fortunes of the Baronet and his friend, since the days of 'lang syne.' Sir James had hardly attained his majority when he succeeded to the paternal estate, and had hardly mourned the usual time for this misfortune, when he married the daughter of his next neighbour. Since that period, the only important occurrences in his life, were the birth of a daughter, the only child, and, some years subsequently, the death of his wife-not to mention now and then a more than usually capital good chase, an occasional prosecution under the game laws, or a speech at a county dinner.

Ormond, on the other hand, unfortunately had no estate to succeed to; but having some friends and a very little money, it was thought that he might in time have acquired one, but for a train of those equivocal occurrences which, in our own history, we set down as misfortunes, and in that of other people, as the effects of imprudence. He had now attained an age when one cannot, strictly speaking, be called a young, or an old, or even a middle-aged, man—he was thirty-five. He had been twelve years engaged in the active

business of life; the fire of youthful enthusiasm, that once burned brightly in his dark eye, was dimmed, if not quenched; his face bore testimony to the influence of warmer suns and ruder weather, and one untimely wrinkle on a once polished brow told tales of early care. He had thus the appearance of being somewhat more than his real age; and few people, turning from him to the round, ruddy, John Bullish face, full blue eye, and clear forehead, of his friend Sir James, would have supposed that the latter was senior by at least half a dozen years; yet this was the case.

It was not without a sigh that Ormond, in the pauses of conversation, surveyed the elegant apartment in which they were seated. Without any of the pride, pomp, and circumstance of fashion, there was yet a substantial richness about the whole, united with that singular air of comfort, which is still to be found in the mansions of some of our country gentlemenand which the fanaticism of high-life with heroic self-denial refuses to enjoy. The fire burned brightly, his host smiled cheerily, and the 'bloodred wine' went round joyously-but without there was rain and storm and darkness; and Ormond could not help thinking of the contrast, as bearing some resemblance to his own fate, compared with that of his friend. One, however, who has been embroiled with the world and the world's accidents for a dozen years, is not likely to allow such feelings to have long the mastery; habits of enjoying are acquired like other habits. There is besides a pleasure in talking of hardships that are past, and struggles that have been made, although in vain; for the very fact of our having endured hardships, and dared to struggle, implies determination and boldness of character.

We have said that Sir James had one child, a daughter. Adelaide Ackfield, as she was called, had now reached the respectable age of sixteen, and three months to boot; -but it would have taken some force of argument to convince her father that she was a bit older than when her mother died, more than half a dozen years before. A man may be very able to judge of the progress of a boy, or a puppy, or a colt, but he is miserably deficient in what relates to mere feminine matters; and thus Sir James, with the clumsy familiarity peculiar to the male animal, and the blind fondness of a widowed father, still took his ' little Ady' on his knee; and little Ady did not yet resent, even in Ormond's presence, this affront to the womanhood of sixteen. She was in truth a child both in habits and appearance. Besides being little of her age, and slightly formed, she had a softness of expression and a

igs, dis

ì

12 3

**Q** 

timidity of manner usually characteristic of ear-lier years. Being treated as a child, she never dreamt of assuming the little woman; and her few companions being mostly younger than herself, her mind, although naturally of no inferior cast, had not as yet had opportunity to resolve into its destined form and pressure—in other words, she wanted mental character. There was nothing about her, in short, which could induce Ormond to regard her in any other light than as a beautiful and amiable child; and in watching her delicate and graceful form, whether gliding round the apartment like some dream of fairyland, or kneeling to adjust her father's slipper, his only thought was, how delightful it would be to have such a daughter! For some days after his arrival, Adelaide had felt his presence rather as a restraint than otherwise, and had taken every opportunity of escaping to more congenial companions, but by degrees he ceased to be a stranger, and she gradually became interested in the conversation between him and her father. With his friend. Ormond had no reserve, and he dwelt on his real or imagined wrongs, his hopes and disappointments, his trials and his struggles, almost in the style of soliloguy.

To a young person, and more particularly to a young female, brought up in the lap of com-

fort, without any nearer acquaintance with misfortune than is derived from the pages of a tale, there must be something wonderfully attractive in a history of adventure and vicisaitude, told viva voce by its hero. The mysterious spell which had heretofore riveted her young attention, and drawn tears from the eyes that were half ashamed of the beautiful weakness, when poring over the 'written troubles' of romance, must work with double power when every incident comes before her in the strength and freshness of reality, and when a dramatic interest is thrown over the whole, by the eloquence or feeling of the narrator. In the present instance, the hero of the tale-the historian of events common perhaps in active life, but matters of strange importance in 'the happy valley.'-was a welllooking, dark-eyed, ill-fated, single gentleman. The tones of his voice were peculiarly rich and deep, such as linger the longest on a feminine ear; and there was, on many occasions, a generous enthusiasm in his manner, which is sure to awaken some congenial echo in the warm bosom of sixteen. The shades too were not invariably dark; there had been resting-places in the wilderness, green spots in the desert: and mingling with the stern feelings of indignant resistance or haughty resignation, there came softer hopes and gentler regrets, dreams of love and beauty,

such as haunt us even in the midst of the world's business, like recollections of a former existence, longings after pure enjoyments that seemed to be for ever denied—imaginings of peaceful happiness, retirement, rural quiet, domestic affeotion—a wife!

After a few days, Adelaide sought no more her young companions as a relief from the gravity of her father's friend. A much longer time was permitted to elapse than Ormond had intended for the duration of his visit; but at length he reluctantly fixed the day of his departure. This was done abruptly on receiving a letter from town, which determined the course he was next to pursue, and which, with the alacrity of one accustoned to exertion, he determined to begin.

"And so, Adelaide," said he gaily, "get ready your letters and messages—and kisses, if you have any to send—for in three days my grace expires."

Adelaide looked at him with the same soft smile which was peculiar to her features, but he could perceive her lip tremble—" Dear, warmhearted girl!" said he, mentally, as he took her passive hand, but at the instant the smile vanished from her face, and tears, in spite of her evident exertions, made their way.

"Ady, my darling Ady!" said the unconscious

parent, proud of his daughter's sensibility—but Adelaide dashed the tears from her eyes, and made her escape from the room. Ormond mused for a moment, and then began a sigh, which ended in a 'phew!' 'She is such a child!' said he, as he took up the letter again, and turned his thoughts to business and the world. When Adelaide appeared at breakfast the next morning, Ormond might have observed a slight but momentary embarrassment in her manner, had he remembered the incident of the preceding evening; as it was, the colour rose unnoticed into her cheeks, and then faded into more than usual paleness. Before the end of the day, however, he could not help feeling that a change of some sort had taken place, and it was with sur-prise that he detected his thoughts, more than once, straying from the business that should have absorbed them into conjecture as to the 'cause of the effect.' Not that she was less gay than usual, or less kind, or less any thing; but her manner was different, whether in gaiety or kindness. There was nothing of reserve, he thought, either in her looks or conduct-at least it was impossible to affix the imputation on any particular glance or gesture—and yet he felt as if there was something in her air which repressed familiarity. He thought he should call her "Miss Ackfield." At dinner, Sir James, we

verily believe, for the first time in his life, asked her to take wine before putting some in her glass, and Ormond would have smiled at the gravity with which she bent her head—if he durst.

The work which for more than two weeks had occupied Miss Ackfield's needle, was the manufacture or the ornamenting of an article which we hardly know how to describe to the reader. We affect not to have been at any time intimately versed in the mysteries of ladies' dress; even if we had, the nomenclature has been so much altered within the last few years, that our obsolete phraseology would be as unintelligible to a modern fair, as her own would be to the ghost of her great-grandmother. We ourselves think proper to denominate the article in question, as it must have a name, a scarf; but at the same time confess our utter inability to show cause why it should be called a scarf more than any thing else. We think, on some occasions, we have seen the like floating on a female arm; or softly undulating over the unimaginable loveliness of her neck, like a thing awakened by the sighs of beauty into a languid, dream-like life: we have seen it too taken by its mistress from that mysterious spot and thrown carelessly upon a chair, where it seemed to us still to live, and feel, and undulate; and we would have liked to touch it if no body had been by. Be it, however, what

it may, it seemed to be an object of no small importance to Miss Ackfield, and especially after the day for Ormond's departure had been fixed. The last night at length arrived which he was to pass under the hospitable roof of his friend, and after day-break on the following morning was the time fixed for starting. The little party sat up to a late hour, each apparently desirous of putting off as long as possible the adieus it was necessary to give and take before separating. Had it not been for a redeeming something which it was impossible to define in her look, in the tone of her voice, or in-he did not know what, Ormond might have thought Adelaide somewhat selfish and unkind; for even in this, the last night of his visit, and at such an hour, the eternal scarf was in her hands, and seemed to engage every thought. Her father half pettishly asked, if there was not some knight about to engage in combat for her sake, to whom she had destined the gift; and Ormond also endeavoured to rally her on the subject, but without disturbing in the least her serious industry. An hour now was sounded which made the little party start, and Ormond grasping his friend's hand with a look more expressive than words, bade him farewell, perhaps for many years. Sir James was affected almost to tears, while with difficulty he uttered his "God bless you!" Then turning

to Adelaide, the parting guest put a cameo sealring, which she had once admired, on her delicate finger, as a little token of regard for 'his friend's daughter;' and, the truth must be told, was just on the eve of inflicting a species of salutation, which, unhappily for single gentlemen, has now passed away, with the other comical customs of antiquity, when it occurred to him that it would be better to leave it alone. It seemed to him that he had made a mistake. He had bent forward to kiss the innocent lips of a child, but found before him in stead, a woman,-her head drawn back with all her sex's majesty, though her eyes sunk under his with all her sex's meekness, while the 'mantling spirit of reserve,' spreading over her whole air, made the daring bachelor shrink. The hand he still held was raised gravely to his lips, a few words of commonplace ceremony muttered, and he found himself slowly wending his way up the staircase before he had altogether recovered from his surprise. When the door was shut, and he found himself alone. he looked round his solitary room with a momentary inflation of the chest, which we cannot venture to say was not caused by the fatigue of ascending the stairs;—the next moment he smiled—and the next almost laughed outright. while he muttered something audibly, of which only the concluding words are on record-" a mere child!" He was soon, however, occupied with a less pleasing reverie, and while pacing backwards and forwards, a thousand anxious thoughts connected with his future prospects crowded into his mind. Immersed in such painful speculations as haunt even the silent watches of the night, with those who are doomed to worldly care, the hours glided by unnoticed—unnoticed indeed during their progress, but each casting as it passed that added shade upon the mind, individually slight perhaps, or imperceptible, but when the hours have amounted to days, and the days to years, which darkens at length into a gloom, so often referred to worse causes, when seen in its usual indications of the harsh temper. the chilled sympathy, the weary heart, and the wrinkled brow.

The morning already begun to dawn, and he had not yet retired to bed. He opened the window-shutters, and watched vacantly the faint beams of day-break struggling with the artificial light in his chamber. It was impossible as yet to distinguish objects clearly; the earth seemed like a wide dim sea around him, not a breath of air moved upon its shadowy bosom, and the cold stillness which was over all things, brought forcibly to his recollection the thrill he had once felt while contemplating from the midnight deck the slumber of the mighty waters. It wanted

only a few hours to the time, when he was once more to launch out into that dark and doubtful world; and feeling no inclination for sleep, he determined to employ himself till then in writing letters of business. As he descended to library to find the necessary implements, unwilling to disturb the deep silence in which the house was buried, he trod as softly as possible. The door was unfastened, and pushing it gently open, he stood for an instant shading the slight taper with his hand. Ormond was not by any means a man of weak nerves, and yet it was with a kind of startling sensation, not very distantly allied to terror, that on looking up he saw a brilliant light in the room, and in the stillness and loneliness of that dead hour, a female form, in lightness, attitude, and costume, more like some beautiful creation of the painter's pencil, or poet's pen, than a daughter of this sinful world. A loose thin night-dress of the purest white seemed to float around her, while her dark hair of extraordinary length, affording a strange contrast, descended almost to her feet. Standing nearly on tiptoe contemplating with upraised eyes something she held, as if admiringly, above her head, this singular apparition seemed to Ormond in the act of rising into the air, and he expected for a moment to see it vanish among the carved book-cases that rose in antique mas-

siveness to the ceiling. On turning casually round, however, for she had been standing with her back towards him, the sparkling eyes and the bright fresh cheek of mortal beauty beamed suddenly on his bewildered senses, and he beheld, with an interest and curiosity almost painful, the young Adelaide. Slowly lowering her hands, she now appeared to fix her eyes attentively on a particular spot of the article they contained, which Ormond recognized to be the scarf. There was a singularity in her manner at this moment, which it would not be easy to describe. She smiled-but the smile did not come as it was wont-her cheek flashing an instantaneous and involuntary reflection of some bright feeling, just as the stream cannot choose but sparkle, when shone on by the sunbeam; no -her features altered earnestly and systematically into the proper mould, and then she smiled -the gravest smile in the world! Her lips moved; Ormond even thought he could distinguish the sound; she seemed afraid of being overheard, and yet to be compelled to speak. The sounds at length became audible, although it was impossible to distinguish the words, and from the measured cadence of her speech, he found that her soliloquy was in verse. The hour, the place, her singular costume—her dishevelled hair—her. unaccountable smile-and her strangely-timed:

rhymes—all impressed Ormond with the idea that she had lost her senses; and he leant against the door in actual agony at the thought. The sounds now ceased, and she raised the scarf to her eyes; when withdrawn, it was wet with her tears-deranged to a certainty! thought Ormond, for the tears appeared to be just of the same mechanical manufacture as the smile, and her eyes looked as unconscious of sorrow as the "violet dropping dew." She now suddenly threw the scarf over her arm; and turning fully to the door threw a glance of such joyous, yet half malicious triumph to where he stood, that Ormand, at once startled and abashed at being detected, as he imagined, in so equivocal a situation, was on the point of stepping forward to explain. The alarm, however, which the motion of the door appeared to give her, convinced him that he was undiscovered. But what was he to do? she had now taken up the light and was gliding with noiseless step to the door. If he attempted to conceal himself, and was discovered !--- If he went forward, it was ten to one she would scream with the surprise, and alarm the house—this would be awkward. His situation was ridiculously distressing. But of two evils, thought he, I will choose the least, I will not be caught, I will advance—yes—yes—I will meet her, said he, breaking into a perspiration, and all the while stepping back into a recess near the door. She was now close to where he stood, and paused for a moment, as if to listen whether any one was stirring; all things, however, were silent, except the heart of the unwilling spy—that beat, as if it would break its prison. She then glided past without observing him, her hair floating like a cloud over her white dress and half uncovered bosom. She ascended the staircase, hardly seeming to touch it with her echoless footsteps, and when she disappeared at the top, Ormond doubted whether it had not all been a dream.

It is not stated in the histories of these important events, how many letters of business Ormond wrote that morning; but we know that when a post-chaise drove up to the door at the appointed time, he was standing on the identical spot where the apparition had performed, or appeared to perform (for he was by no means certain of the fact) its mystical rites, his arms folded, his eyes half shut, like one who dreams when awake; and the little taper he had held still lighted on the table, its wick an inch long, and its tiny flame lost in the broad beams of morning. It was not with his usual decided step that he at length entered the carriage; he appeared to hesitate for a moment before raising both his feet from the ground. His eyes wan-

dered over the far and misty track he was about to pursue, and then turned to the hospitable mansion behind him, standing lofty and grave in the stillness of early morning, the door ajar as if affording a peep into the warmth and richness covered by that cold exterior, one bareheaded domestic standing motionless on the steps, forgetting in his sleepiness to bow out the parting guest; but not a sound from within, not a window-shutter unclosed-no not one! Ormond paused, looked as if he had forgotten something, then slowly seated himself in the vehicle,—and when he turned again, other houses met his eyes. other gardens, other lawns, and our traveller once more found himself abroad upon the world. to struggle and to bear, to offend and defend, to jostle and be jostled, to suffer and to enjoy, through its headlong, dizzy, bustling, important, paltry, grave, and ridiculous career. Resolving to waste no more thought on the unfathomable vagaries of a girl of sixteen, he now addressed himself seriously to more important deliberations. This, however, was a matter of no small difficulty; --- not that his thoughts wandered backwards, or that his dreams were still haunted by the apparition of the library—it was a brown paper parcel which disturbed him. Yes, a parcel wrapped up in brown paper-or whity-brown paper, we shall not be positive—and fastened,

not with string like a grocer's parcel, or with tape like a bundle of briefs, but with pins after the fashion feminine. It lay on the seat beside him; the skirts of his coat almost touched it. He eved it once or twice, but would not be disturbed. The equipment, thought he, continuing his reflections, will cost-a pin (pshaw!)-the vessel being laden with nothing much heavier than her guns, having only a few tons of-brown paper—(curse the brown paper!) he moved pettishly to the other side of the seat, but a lurch of the carriage, as his nautical friends would say, moved the brown paper parcel also, and brought it still closer alongside, if not altogether aboard him. Ormond looked at it askance-reluctantly; but there was no help for it, he took it up, undid the pin with a slow but not very steady hand, and making an unsuccessful attempt at feeling surprise, beheld the scarf roll its airy length to his feet. A note accompanied this singular present, containing the following words, written in the prettiest little hand in the world: -" Miss Ackfield, in exchange for Mr. Ormond's beautiful cameo, offers him this little sample of her industry;" and further down, in allusion to what had passed the preceding evening, respecting its destination to some knight-militant-" Be brave, be fortunate!" And this was all! he turned the note up and down, backwards and for-

wards, sideways and lengthways-but not another syllable appeared; while the blush with which he had begun its perusal was deepened by self-convicted, and perhaps somewhat mortified vanity, as he acknowledged in spite of himself that he had expected more. But then the library scene, thought vanity, rallying—the smile, the tear! But even vanity acknowledged the folly of reasoning on the actions of fantastic sixteen; besides, she might have been asleep; there have been instances of as singular sleep-walking-or Ormand himself might have been asleep, and in truth, at this moment, he would have hesitated not a little to take his corporal oath of the reality of what he had seen. He now deposited the note in his pocket, and set himself to replace the scarf in its brown paper; but, whether owing to the awkwardness of male hands, or to the natural intractability of such articles, this was an occupation of some time; more than once, when he had succeeded in rolling it carefully up, and was just about to make all fast with the pin, in the most provoking manner imaginable, it would escape from his impatient fingers, and fill half the carriage with its exuberant, but shadowy folds. Then, when at last the pin was firmly fixed, where was he to put it? not in the pocket of the coach, where it would be crushed to death; his portmanteau was outside, and at any rate

quite full; and on the seat, where he had originally found it, it was perpetually jolting about, and sometimes falling down, to the intolerable disturbance of his meditations.

We shall now wander back, and take a single peep at the young enchantress herself-meanwhile leaving Ormond fairly saddled with the most troublesome post-chaise companion, that single gentleman was ever bothered withal. But hush !---softly, we entreat, dear reader, for we are now on holy ground! By the 'dim, religious light,' admitted through the closed curtains, we perceive that we are in the very sanctum sanctorum of innocence and beauty. Following a sunbeam bolder than the rest, our eyes are carried direct to the little divinity of the place, who, even in sleep, appears to assert her goddesship; for the breathless stillness of the scene seems to be the effect of her slumber; and her warm cheek, brought out by the sunbeam amidst the shadyness of her canopied retreat, is in our fancy the dispenser of the mellowed radiance which illumines the apartment-

"The light that beams from heavenly Una's face, Making a sunshine in the shady place!"

Her brow is clear and calm, and as white as the snowy pillow on which she reclines; the bloom of health is on her fresh cheek; the soft, halfformed smile of unwithered youth, plays around her lips; but the lifelessness of expression, in which these chiselled features so lately slept, the utter unconsciousness in which her girlish slumbers were buried, have given place to a touching sensibility, which confers a strange, undefinable interest in what before might have been regarded with merely the cold admiration we bestow on a beautiful picture.—Why is this? By what means has so sudden a change been effected? The flower ripens by degrees, and, under the growing influence of the sun,

The rose, like a nymph to the bath addrest, Doth slowly uncover her fragrant breast; Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air, The soul of her beauty and love lies bare.

The stream awakens from its icy slumber by gradations almost imperceptible. There is not an analogy in nature which will answer our purpose. Do we further inquire whether the same change would have taken place at this particular juncture, if Ormond, with his delectable morceaux of auto-biography, had been but the visionary hero of a novel; whether, in common parlance, her time was come, and like Titania, after the magical ointment had been applied to her sleeping eyes, she would have fallen in love with an ass, had he been the first to present himself. It may be answered, that as marriages are made in

heaven, so love, the precursor of matrimony, (a kind of avant-courier of Hymen, who announces the arrival, and takes leave at the door,) may in like manner be supposed to come of destiny. But this gets us into an argument with the divines and the metaphysicians, and embroils us with a multitude of contending systems and hypotheses, on the question of free will and necessity, a chaos which perhaps may contain the elements of truth, although as yet without form. For our part, we are pleased with the idea of the fairy ointment, and cannot help thinking, what a wonderful deal of trouble in the way of speculation and argument it would save, to be able to refer at once, the incongruities which daily torment, amuse, or astonish us in this strange passion, to a touch of Oberon's finger.

However, the digression has answered our purpose; for the reader will perceive; that while we have been holding him by the button, our heroine has had time to steal unperceived out of bed, and the slight toilet, demanded by 'only papa,' is already finished. Her next occupation this morning was to write a letter to a dear and confidential friend, one Miss Caroline Somebody, at that time enclosed in the sort of English nunnery, termed a boarding-school; and the following extract from her letter is given as a

genuine specimen of the usual style of correspondence, between a Miss at home and a boarding-school Miss of their respective ages:

"O, Caroline! the night is past, the spell is spoken, and Ormond is gone! I obeyed your every direction, my friend and counsellor; the secret work in the very heart of the scarf-the hour (it sounded the middle stroke of three when the last and centre stitch was drawn)-the tear -the smile—the sigh, at the very moment proper to each—the mysterious emblem, which it is impossible for him to discover, till his destiny is fixed—all were perfect! But after all, now, is it not impudent to try to make a man love me whether he will or no? I am sure Ormond will struggle like a drowning swimmer. If he does find it out, how mean, how foolish he will think me. I wish I had not ventured; it absolutely makes me shrink all over when the idea of my boldness occurs to me. But are you sure there is nothing omitted, for after one has taken the trouble you know---Heigho! is it not a comical feeling to be in love? But I scarcely know what I am about, and was just forgetting your desire to hear every syllable of the parting scene. Fast flew the melancholy but delightful hours, whose traces must so long remain impressed on my memory. The deep tones of that voice, whose echoes are yet sounding in the innermost recesses of my heart, fell fainter and fainter as the time approached. An interesting melancholy stole over his at-all-times thoughtful, but notthe-less-on-that-account handsome, features, and at length, when unwillingly he arose, it was with a start of inexpressible grace he exclaimed. 'Good God, it is two o'clock!' I of course pass over the adieus exchanged between him and papa; but when he turned to me, I thought I should have sunk-only think! before he could have the slightest conception that I intended my scarf for him, he presented me himself with a parting gift-a ring; the very sealring I admired on his finger, at least three days before; the figure on the stone, Love covering his face with his wings. How odd, that he should remember my admiring it! Don't you think it strange? Having put the ring, with his own hands, on my finger, he bent forward-do you know. I think he was going to kiss me! but he did'nt: he only raised my hand to his lipscontact did not ensue, but I felt his warm breath; it might have been a sigh! he paused for an instant, dropped my yielding hand, stepped backward two paces, and then said in a low but impressive voice—' Good bye, Miss Ackfield!"

We must now follow Ormond to the great city, commonly designated by the monosyllable 'town;' the servants are carrying his luggage up stairs to his apartments-all save one article, of which he himself has the charge, and which he bears gently along in both hands with the grace and tenderness of a milliner's apprentice fetching home a new bonnet. It was with such a sigh as we heave on finishing some difficult and complicated business that he at length deposited the troublesome treasure on his dressing-table; and then feeling himself at liberty to attend to other matters of grave urgency, he went forth on his affairs. When he returned home in the evening, as he was just entering his bed-chamber to dress, he was surprised, from this sanctum sanctorum of single gentlemen, to hear, not one female tongue, which might have been pardonable, but half a dozen, all so busy at the same instant, that for some time he was at a loss to know the subject of their debate. The door, however, was ajar, and though not liking the odds, he thought there could be no harm in walking into his own room. His presence was quite unperceived by the conclave, consisting of his landlady, her mother, three daughters, and two servant wenches, all standing round the window, the mysterious scarf in the midst, which they were now holding up to the light, and now holding down, turning,

twisting, placing sideways, lengthways, folding. unfolding, admiring, blaming, and criticising, all in a breath, as if afraid of losing time. Ormond's brow darkened with anger, and then reddened with shame, as he listened to their remarks, interspersed with interminable, O las! Good gracious! Only thinks! and interrupted by bursts of laughter. His vexation at length venting itself in the sort of growl which relieves one's chest so much, when one dares not or must not bite, the guilty landlady turned her head, and with a scream, which was instantaneously echoed in every note of the gamut, from the thin treble of the grandmother, down to the guttural bass of the fat cook, dropped the object of their feminine curiosity, and with a sidelong curtsey made for the door, The girls next followed mama one by one, curtseying sideways in imitation as they passed, smirking, leering, or bridling; then the chamber-maid, cocking her chin with a pert dignity; then the fat cook, whose blowzy cheeks he could perceive swelling with suppressed mirth as she insinuated herself out at the door; and lastly, the tottering grandmother, with her tedious feebleness and vacant simper, and old-ladyish politeness. Ormond bit his lips till the blood started; then, ashamed of his ill humour, attempted to whistle some lively notes; and the ludicrous gravity with which he per-

formed this operation at length amused even himself. Taking up the scarf, which still lay on the ground, he resolved to deposit it in some place impervious to the vulgar gaze. His writing-desk was the first object which met his eye, and without thinking further, he opened it, and laid the silken folds carefully in the drawer. Rash, thoughtless, imprudent Ormond! or shall we say rather, infatuated victim, predestined fool! If thou hadst but buried the insidious gift in the depths of thy portmanteau; or concealed it within the leaves of the huge Bible left thee by thy mother, with her blessing; or stowed it in any other unvisited corner, where its magical influence would be hidden from thine eyes and dead to thy heart! But destiny will have its course; or if there be really a power vested in man to do what he willeth, the story of thy fate herein faithfully recorded, will be a beacon and a warning to all bachelors from fifteen to fiveand-forty, henceforth and for evermore.

The intention of a keepsake is to present to the eye an object associated in some direct and intimate manner with the giver, so that we can no sooner look on the gift, than the idea of our absent friend flashes at once on our mind. But associations may be worn out by frequent use, like the impression on a coin. The eye becomes so accustomed to a ring, for instance, which we

wear constantly on our finger, that at length that which seemed once a magic circle, conjuring up so many slumbering forms, lost and buried in our memory, the absent or the dead, becomes void and powerless, a mere paltry ornament. A portrait is better, but that is generally the gift of betrothed love, which of course needs not any foreign aid to maintain a subjugation so complete. In their choice of a keepsake, we would recommend to our fair friends to fix on, and to our bachelor friends, to decline, something-no matter what, which would present itself to the eye not oftener than once a day. The thing signifies not a straw—let it be a straw, so that the association between the giver and the gift is entire and direct. We are ignorant whether Miss Ackfield and her boarding-school friend had been influenced by sound philosophical reasoning on the subject, or whether they had altogether depended on those mystical rites of which Ormond had been so unwilling a witness; but certainly, as matters turned out, no choice could be happier than theirs. Even in the midst of business, than which we know not a more effectual cure for vagaries of the imagination, the unfortunate bachelor was beset by ideas that would, perhaps, have been speedily forgotten, had the scarf been in his pocket. He had generally occasion to open his desk once in the day-but what un-

husiness-like confusion of letters and ideas! Adelaide was among his papers; her long hair trailed dimly over the writing, her tears mingled with the ink, and her malicious smile led the pen astray. A letter by and by arrived from Sir James, and Ormond did not attempt to disguise from himself, that it was with a strong curiosity to know what message Adelaide would send, that he began its perusal. He read the first page with composure, at the end of the second he became fidgety, and when his eye was half way down the third, absolutely out of temper. My good friend, thought he, is so mightily occupied with his little matters;—what is all this? partridges, woodcocks, pheasants, detonating guns, Joe Manton, poaching, turnips—stuff! He began again, and read it patiently through a second time, but not a syllable so much as insinuated a compliment from the young lady; till at length, apparently an after-thought, and written crossways at a corner of the letter, he detected the words "Adelaide's respects." Adelaide's respects! well, this was better than nothing, and yet not much. But then to be inserted after the letter had been finished, perhaps sealed, must it not have been by her express request? the very coldness of the word 'respects' he at length began to like; it looked so guarded, and a guarded expression implies that there is

something to conceal. Many months had passed away since his visit, and still the scarf, assisted by the letters of Sir James, maintained its influence over his ideas. The Baronet's style, however, when he mentioned his daughter, was now a good deal altered. He seemed gradually to have discovered that she was no longer a child; she appeared more frequently on the stage, and not as the mere amusement of his leisure hours, but as one of the most important of the dramatis personæ; her opinion was sometimes quoted both in matters of taste and business; and at length his "whole life and conversation" seemed in some sort to take their tone from her ideas, sentiments, or wishes. She was now mentioned invariably as " Miss Ackfield;" and appeared to have the absolute command of the establishment. Ormond watched with intense interest and anxiety, this revolution in Sir James's way of thinking; he had latterly on some occasions been betrayed into exclaiming, almost aloud,-If she was not so mere a child, I do believe I should fancy myself in love with her! but now he acknowledged with infinite candour, that a girl of seventeen had really, as Sir James seemed to imagine, some title to be considered as a young woman. It was observed about this time, that he paid somewhat more attention to the toilet than formerly; or than is customary at a period

of life yet so far from the time when single gentlemen begin to dress against age. The story indeed goes, that he was detected in the act of extracting a hair from his eyebrow, of a somewhat equivocal colour; and whether in abstraction of mind, or not, it is certain that he was once found reading by lamp-light, an advertisement of "Macassar Oil" posted at the corner of a street. At this time he received a letter from Sir James, containing a warm invitation to spend a few weeks at the hall; and his company was more particularly requested on the day when Miss Ackfield was to complete her seventeenth year, on which occasion a fête was to be given. But it happened at this particular juncture, that business of a very important nature required his presence in town; he turned the matter in his mind a thousand different ways; but it would not do,—stay he must, or expose himself to both loss and ridicule: and with a heavy heart he declined the invitation. Having made this sacris fice to reason and philosophy, he directed his thoughts to business with what alacrity he might. He could not help thinking, however, how vexatious it was: and counted the days with as much anxiety as if he had really meant to be present at Adelaide's fête. At length the time drew so near, that one morning, when lying awake in bed, he calculated, in mere vacancy of

mind, that if he should set out that moment it would be late on the evening of the ball before he could possibly arrive. Now we beg the reader to observe, if indeed it hath not been made sufficiently manifest already, that we are not writing an apology, but an impartial memoir; it is neither our business nor intention to press reasons into the service of our hero; we have merely to record, as we have hitherto done, plainly and historically, certain important events in their chronological order; and having so premised, we go on to state that just half an hour after the above-mentioned curtain calculation had been made. Ormond was on his way to the hall. The stately mansion of the Ackfield family, on the night of Ormond's arrival, presented an unusually brilliant appearance. As the carriage rolled along the winding avenue, the lights gleaming through the trees, and the music already audible from the open windows, excited an expectation which was not at all diminished on a nearer approach; festoons of coloured lamps were tastefully suspended from the branches; the hall was transformed into the appearance of a forest walk, dimly lighted by smaller lamps, twinkling like stars through the foliage, to increase the effect on entering the dancing rooms; and, in short, things in general seemed to be managed in a style quite creditable to country folks. Ormond was heartily welcomed by Sir James, who was as much surprised as delighted to see him; and was then despatched upstairs to dress, with an injunction to lose no time. This was needless; for Ormond's impatience could hardly brook the delay of shaking hands with his friend; his toilet was made in less time than the phlegmatic Sir James believed to be possible, and almost immediately after his arrival had been announced to Miss Ackfield, he entered the dancing-room.

Those who have observed the difference which a single year makes in the appearance of most girls of sixteen, will be able to comprehend the surprise with which our bachelor gazed on the beautiful and graceful young woman who now stood before him. Her fairy form had now expanded into dimensions which appeared to him the very beau-ideal of female stature and tournure; a dignified ease had taken place of her former shrinking timidity, and the elegance of her present address was strongly in contrast with the embarrassment, which, in the unformed and neglected girl, had pained while it interested him. There was no perceptible difference in her manner of receiving him and the other friends of her father who were present, and indeed Ormond fancied that he could perceive a studied coldness even through the hospitable kindness with which she welcomed his return: there were no allusious

to their former meeting-no conscious looksnothing that could induce even vanity to hope that she regarded him in any other light than as a common acquaintance. It was only a few moments that duty to the other guests permitted her to devote to him; and when she turned calmly away. Ormond felt the high spirits with which he had entered the apartment sink into utter despondency; the vague hopes that had risen in his mind, heaven knows how, the visionary and fantastic thoughts that had haunted him so long, all melted into 'thin air.' She was now encircled by a group of gentlemen who seemed to vie with each other in their attentions; the young, the rich, and the happy were around her, striving for her smiles; and she, young, rich, and happy herself, the queen of the night, the fairest of the beautiful, seemed worthy of still higher homage. Ormond gazed with a sickening heart, and bitterly regretted that he had left London. At this moment their eyes met, and Adelaide, struck with the depression visible in his countenance, glided swiftly across the room,-'You are fatigued, Mr. Ormond,' said she, with a warmth of manner, that for the moment reanimated him,--- It was so kind in you to come; and my father is so delighted to see you on this important evening-you know what a spoiled girl I am!' These few words spoken in her natural-

ly soft and kind manner, addressing him with the familiarity of an old friend, and alluding to former times, had a visible effect on his spirits, and he gallantly determined to enter the circle which moved round her. They will at least respect my age, thought he, smiling as he caught the reflection of his gentlemanly figure in a mirror which they passed. The ball passed on like other balls; the supper succeeding was discussed like other suppers; the company at length departed, the last roll of the carriages was heard on the gravelled avenue, the lights were ex-tinguished, and the scene of late festivity was buried in silence and darkness. Ormond slept almost as little as on the last night he had passed in the same house; but when he rose from bed, although none of the family was yet stirring, he found the morning far advanced. Having dressed, he used the freedom of an old acquaintance and let himself out, to take a ramble before breakfast. The companion of his walk, as she had been of his dreams, was Adelaide Ackfield; and in calling to mind her words, her manner, and her looks, the preceding evening, and in endeavouring to analyse the feelings, of whose existence he had till then been ignorant, and in forming prudent resolutions. for the future, the time stole on unperceived. His meditations were interrupted for a moment by the shrill

screaming voices of some little boys at the roadside who had quarrelled, 'I will tell Miss Ackfield!' cried one in a threatening voice. Further on was a cottage, with whose tenant, a poor old woman, he had formed some acquaintance, during his former visit. On knocking at the door, a feeble voice desired him to come in, and obeying, he was sorry to see the poor creature, alone and unwell, confined to bed. 'God bless thee, sweet lady,' said she, I knew it was no other step than thine, coming out of the light and warmth of this sunny morning, to sit by the dark curtains of sickness and death.—See,' continued she, 'I have been trying with my failing eyes to make out these blessed lines of the Comforter; but now there is a clear sight, and a sweet voice to read to me, -What! is it not Miss Ackfield? Ormond explained her mistake, and after a short visit, went out pleased and affected. He next strolled into the village, which is part of Sir James's property; and while passing along its quiet street, a babbling of young voices from an open window attracted his attention to the place. On looking in he saw a number of female children at their early studies, whose innocent little faces, set off by their white caps and clean check dresses, interested him exceedingly. 'It is Miss Ackfield's school, sir,' said a little girl who was going in, and observed the stranger looking as if inquiringly around. Respect and esteem now equalled admiration in Ormond's thoughts of this charming young woman; and while slowly bending his steps towards the hall, the contrast between her situation the night before and the one she probably held by this time at the bed-side of sickness and poverty, brought to his recollection the well known and exquisite lines, entitled, Art and Nature. He repeated them first inwardly, and then aloud—but the reader knows that there the second situation of the heroine is by the cradle of her infant, while her husband watches them both with rapture.

Days, weeks, and even months passed on, and Ormond became more in love, but very little better pleased with his reception. There was one thing which almost maddened him; he had never seen the ring he had given her on her finger-she must have lost it, or laid it aside as unworthy of preservation; and the reader knows with what painful fidelity he had kept the scarf! He several times resolved to introduce the subject, and know at least the fate of his unfortunate gift; but she either parried it by playful manœuvres, or silenced him by downright displeasure. At length, determined no longer to allow his life to run away in a dream, he fixed the day for his departure. The manner of Miss Ackfield had not been sufficiently marked to destroy all hopes

in Ormond's breast, nor yet encouraging enough to induce a proud man like him to run the hazard of a refusal. It was impossible she could have the slightest suspicion of the midnight rites which he had witnessed being known to him, and yet there was a mystery in her conduct respect-ing the keepsakes, which he was now determined to penetrate. One day when they were alone in the garden, encouraged by a softness, amounting to melancholy, in her manner, when they had been talking of his departure, he summoned courage to say to her- We are now, dear Miss Ackfield, about to part, will you permit me just to ask—the question may be of importance to me, and the answer I fear can be but a matter of indifference to you; the scarf'—'The scarf, Sir,' said she, starting. 'The ring, I mean,' continued Ormond, 'the pledge—the keepsake, I would say'—Adelaide's agitation at this moment became so excessive that he stopped short in dismay. She put her hand to her eyes, and he could see the tears gush through her fingers. Ormond, cursing his folly, yet knowing not of what he had been guilty, would have soothed, knelt to her, but she waved him away. 'Mr. Ormond,' said she at last, with a strong effort, 'I did not expect this; --- and least of all from you; think of what I was when guilty of the indelicacy I must call it, you allude to; a silly,

thoughtless, motherless girl! It was but a jest, a child's sport; the letters which no doubt surprised and shocked you'-- 'Letters,' exclaimed Ormond in amazement 'what is all this?' Adelaide stopped, much agitated; a sudden thought seemed to dart into her brain-her eyes lighted up joyfully, and she said with quickness and animation 'Yes, a jest—only a jest; it was an unfit present—only return me the scarf, and you shall have the choice of my jewel-box,-or your own cameo,' added she, with archness, ' if you will?' But Ormond too had his sudden thoughts; and without reply he darted like an arrow towards the house, pursued, but unsuccessfully, by the fair supplicant. He quickly gained his own apartment, unfolded the scarf, and after a close search discovered in the very middle, in letters so fine, it was no wonder they had hitherto escaped detection, (being formed of a single hair.) the words Ormond and Adelaide twined together. Depositing the precious document in his bosom, he ran back to the garden,- 'The ring, Adelaide,' cried he, almost out of breath, 'supposing I was inclined to make the exchange, is it still in your power? have you preserved my keepsake?' Adelaide held up the palm of her hand, and he perceived with exstasy that she had never ceased to wear it, the cameo

having been merely turned downwards, so as to make the ring resemble a plain hoop.

We lament that it is not in our power to pursue the conversation further, and many pretty things we are afraid are thus irrecoverably lost to the reader. The last words we could gather from any authentic source were—'Tell me, dearest, by what power you threw this spell over my heart, even before I knew you as you are, good as you are beautiful, admirable as—'Hush, hush, hush, it was "NATURAL MAGIC,"'s said Adelaide, hiding her face in her lover's bosom.

## THE CAST-AWAY.

One dark, stormy night in the year 18—, the family of Mr. Stuart of Ard was watching with anxious interest the fate of a vessel which had been driven by stress of weather into the loch of that name, and was now seen working her way through a navigation peculiarly difficult at this season, and seldom attempted at any time by vessels of so large a burthen. It was evident from her manœuvres that there was no pilot on board capable of directing her course; and the sea ran so high that it was impossible to afford any assistance from the shore.

Mr. Stuart's house, although at some distance from the banks of the loch, commanded from its elevated situation a complete view of the whole, extending even to the sea; the spectators had therefore witnessed from her first entrance the operations of the unfortunate bark. She was at this time nearly opposite, but only dimly visible through the increasing darkness of the night;

while the beacon-fires which now kindled on the rocks, as her situation became more alarming, casting their red glare over those black and troubled waters, the minute-guns falling with their startling and ominous sound on the ear, amidst the heavy swinging of the storm, the shouts of the people on the shore, whose torches were seen flitting among the rocks, and the fainter voices heard at intervals from the vessel. shaped out by the excited imagination to shrieks of terror and unavailing cries for help, added an appalling and progressive interest to the spectacle. Mr. Stuart had hastened to the beach some time before, and the servants having followed one by one, his sister, a maiden lady, and his daughter, now found themselves alone by the open window. Their alarm increased, while it became every moment more evident that the vessel would be dashed in pieces upon the rocks; and as a thousand shocking details crowded into her fancy—the cries of the drowning seamen their cold and mangled bodies tumbling among the surges in a hideous mockery of life-the groans of the survivors, left torn and bruised only to perish more lingeringly on the beach -Leslie Stuart hid her face in her aunt's bosom in an agony of apprehension. But when a fearful sound from the shore, followed by her aunt's startling shriek, had proclaimed that their worst-

anticipations had been realized, the energies of her woman's spirit returned, and springing on her feet, she flew to the scene of calamity, there to take the post of her sex by the side of suffering and death. The miseries of that dismal night were not confined to the strangers, for when Leslie reached the shore, and was watching with breathless interest the efforts made by a young man, the son of her nurse, to save one of the passengers who had leaped from the vessel and was now faintly struggling with the waves, an unexpected sea struck the gallant fellow, just as he had succeeded in dragging the exhausted swimmer upon the rock, and dashed him from the insecure footing he held, into the foaming deep. His efforts to regain the rock were made with admirable skill and self-possession, and for a long time their result was doubtful. But at length his strength began to fail, and he was seen gradually receding from the land; the inarticulate cries he had from time to time uttered, apparently endeavouring to make his comrades comprehend some plan he wished them to pursue, but which were stifled by the waters hissing about his head and gurgling in his throat, now became fewer and fainter; at last, when hope was just expiring, a huge billow threw him within reach of the rock, and a shout of joy burst from his friends;-but his strength was

spent; his arm was stretched feebly forth, and in vain; the light of the torches fell for some moments on his face as he was carried out by the receding waters; an instant of suspense ensued, and the wave returned-alone. The vouth's mother was one of the spectators of this catastrophe; she had not uttered a word or a cry during the whole of the struggle, as fearing that her voice would confuse or unnerve him: but it required the strength of several men to hinder her from springing over the rocks to his assistance. Even after the wave had returned without him. and it became certain that his body had floated far to sea, she was silent for several minutes—a mother hopes so long; but when conviction at last flashed upon her mind, the feelings that had been pent up in her bosom burst forth in a cry so wild and loud, as to make every heart tremble. The stranger in the meantime had been able, although much bruised and worn out, to retain his hold on the rock, over which the sea still beat furiously, and was at length with much difficulty. dragged to the shore, where he lay in a state of insensibility at Leslie's feet. While stooping to render him what assistance might be in her power till he could be conveyed to some place of shelter, she felt herself violently drawn back by the arm, and on turning round saw her nurse, the bereft mother, standing behind her.

phrensy of the unhappy woman's grief had subsided, but her voice was still wild and strange, as she inquired with a hurried vehemence, "What is it you do? Is it to him, Leslie Stuart, you would minister, of all the victims of the tempest? God forbid, that even in the hour of my anguish I would leave him to perish without help, but is there not another on all the shore to give it, but her who drank at the same bosom with my son?"

Leslie endeavoured to soothe the poor mother, and would have persuaded her to go home from the fatal scene, but a groan from the apparently dying man, drew her attention to more urgent need, and in spite of her nurse's resistance, she knelt down beside him, and began to chafe his hands:—" And is it even so?" said the childless woman, as with a mixture of pity and curiosity she watched her proceedings; "well, well, if it is so, it must be so; 'a wilfu' woman will have her way,' as it is said—we must all dree our weird!" and so saying she left the spot.

A great part of the night was spent by Mr. Stuart and his servants on the beach, while the ladies were unremitting in their attentions to those who had been injured in escaping from the wreck; some of whom were taken to the nearest cottages, and one to Mr. Stuart's house. This last was the same who had been the object of Leslie's

benevolent exertions on the shore, and who had been the innocent cause of her foster-brother's fate. He had lain on the bed where he was placed for several hours, scarcely exhibiting any signs of life; and Leslie, as she watched anxiously his cold fixed features, began almost to despair. He appeared to be a young man about twenty-five; and from his dress, which was military, and his olive complexion, which spoke of warmer suns than shone on the wild coasts of --shire, she concluded that he was a foreigner. His benevolent attendant had at length the satisfaction of perceiving some signs of returning animation, and in a little while he opened his eyes. and gazed wildly around, uttering an exclamation of surprise in Spanish. He now continued to become progressively better, although still weak, and Leslie, in compliance with her aunt's entreaties, at last retired.

The day broke slowly and heavily on the scene of devastation. The wind had fallen, and was now only heard at intervals, sweeping in melancholy gusts over the loch, as if bewailing the ruin it had occasioned. Thick black clouds moved gloomily across the sky, from whence the rain fell with a plashing monotonous sound upon the earth, the wearied sea rolled along in smooth unbroken masses, or rose in sullen surges on the rocks, where the remains of a large vessel, of

which one mast was yet standing, with its shattered cross-trees and torn rigging, hung motionless above the tide, a monument and a warning. Such was the scene which presented itself to Leslie Stuart, when she retired to her own apartment-not to seek the repose in bed, as might be imagined she stood so much in need of, but to sit by the window, leaning her head on her hand, to look abroad on those sullen waters, to collect, if possible, her bewildered thoughts, to muse and to dream. The agitation produced by the events of the night had not sufficiently subsided to leave entire tranquillity behind; she still felt a restless buoyancy of mind, resembling the smooth sea, but without the blackness or the surge. Among the things that most frequently passed in review before her fancy, were the circumstances connected with the preservation of the young man, whom accident seemed to have made more peculiarly her own care from the first. Even the life that had been lost to preserve his, seemed to make his fate of more importance; while without her assistance she knew the sacrifice would probably have been made in vain. Among the many objects to whom relief was necessary, the people on the beach had not appeared disposed to show peculiar favour to him who had been the means of destroying their comrade-but for her he would, in all probability,

have been left to perish on the shore; in defiance of a cold-blooded superstition, she had herself preserved and tended him, ordered his removal to her father's house, watched the signs of returning life, as they slowly broke over his pallid features, and caught the first accents from his colourless lips. Her thoughts, as a woman, naturally turned to the ties which probably bound him to that world for which she had preserved him. Had he a mother or a sister to rejoice in his preservation, she inquired—perhaps one dearer than either, in that sunny land from which he had come, whose thoughts at this moment were with him in his feverish slumbers. A though sand questions suggested themselves to her heart, and her speculations threw a romantic interest over the desolate stranger.

She at length went to bed, to continue in her dreams the same train of ideas, and awoke in the morning to hasten to his bedside. De Valiera was indeed in a situation which claimed the sympathy of every generous mind. One of the few Spaniards of high birth, who were true to their country in her hour of extremity, he had been, as might be supposed, marked out for persecution, when the last hopes of Spain were crushed. The re-exaltation of the loathsome reptile, before whom this besotted people prostrated themselves with more than Egyptian idolatry, was the signal

of proscription and vengeance; and Valiera, who had probably relied on the promises of the cowardly tyrant, with the utmost difficulty escaped on board a foreign vessel, bound for this country. The few articles of value he had been able to secure were lost, with some trifling exceptions. in his present disaster, and he now found himself the heir of an illustrious family, brought up in the midst of luxury and magnificence, without friends and without money on a foreign shore. It was some days before he had sufficiently recovered to be able to relate the particulars of his story to the family; and when he did, the impression made on Mr. Stuart was not on the whole so favourable as might have been expected. Descended from a family that had followed the fortunes of their royal namesakes, with almost Spanish infatuation, his hereditary prejudices did not allow him to be very warm in the cause to which Valiera had devoted himself-not that he was himself a greater admirer of political slavery than others, or that he would not have resisted the introduction of 'il re absoluto' into his own country, even in the person of his favourite Stuarts; but in things that cannot effect our interests, or influence our conduct, we do not subject our opinions to very severe scrutiny. We have one set for theory and another for practice; and the former has generally descended to

us, like other heir-looms, from our ancestors, too inconvenient and unfashionable for use, but not the less carefully preserved on that account.

When it was seen that the old dynasty had for ever past away, and men's minds had time to settle, our Stuarts, like most of their contemporaries, followed the stream of moral and physical improvement, whose effects began gradually to appear, even in the wildest districts of the Highlands. As a first step, and a necessary preliminary, to improvement of almost any sort, the family threw off the trammels of the church of Rome, and the present Mr. Stuart, although born and christened a catholic, at six years of age became a zealous protestant, whether through the immediate influence of the Spirit does not appear. Some men however are prone to extremes; Mr. Stuart was not contented with being a zealous protestant, but by degrees associated himself with some of those sectarians, who go on the principle that 'reverse of wrong is right,' without adverting at the same time to the equally well-received proposition, that 'extremes meet.' By the help of these pious men, and frequent seeking of the inexorable Moloch of modern saints, whom they impiously denominate Lord,' he at length arrived at that debateable ground of intolerance and bigotry to which catholic and protestant have an equal claim. The

struggle between his family pride, connected as it was, and indeed founded on recollections of ' the other family,' and their times of religious darkness, and his present spiritual humility, was curious; and except on the sabbath or other fielddays, it would have been hard to say which had the mastery. The worst of it was, that both these feelings, although opposite and contradictory in themselves, united against the unfortunate Spaniard-who was both a rebel and a Roman catholic. Valiera himself, young, sanguine, and impetuous, was an enthusiast in religion, as in every thing else; he entered warmly into argument in defence of his own creed, and without a single mean or ungenerous feeling in his own bosom, could not comprehend the propriety of concealing his sentiments, however opposite to those of his host.

As for Miss Stuart the sister, she was merely 'a good sort of woman.' She managed the household, scolded the servants, made currant wine, attended meeting, and looked grave on Sunday, all with equal and undeviating propriety. The command to love one another she interpreted, 'Love thy brother and thy niece,' and she obeyed it most punctually; but if foreigners had been included in the injunction she would have found it more difficult; for, as she said, she had a natural dislike to foreigners. Leslie Stuart, again,

her niece, the object of this concentrated attachment, and the darling even of her grave, proud, and bigoted father, had no natural dislike to any living creature. Her nature indeed was so perfectly soft and kind, that she would not have found it impossible to comply even with that precept of her religion, which commanded her to love her enemies; but as yet her obedience had not been put to the proof, for she had no enemies to love. The misfortunes of Valiera attracted her warmest sympathy. Women are generally attached to the minority-not that we would repeat the hackneyed accusation of their love of opposition, but there is something generous in the idea of supporting, even with their voices, the falling or the fallen. Had it been a tale of triumph, in place of disaster and defeat, told by the young Spaniard, her feelings might have been different; for then her admiration of his bravery, and the involuntary sway exercised by his enthusiastic eloquence over her imagination, would have been damped by her pity for the vanquished. As it was, he was the object both of admiration and pity; the noble-looking being, whom her fancy invested with all the splendid attributes of a hero of romance, had been thrown on her protection; she had probably been the preserver of his life; he was at this moment indebted to her kindness for every little comfort

his situation required; and when at length he was able to go out into the fresh air, and look round on the strange land where fate had cast him, like a wreck dashed from the bosom of the ocean, it was on her arm he leant. The growing dislike of her father, and the indifference of her aunt, increased the attentions she felt it necessary to pay him; she trembled least he should perceive, even through his ignorance of the national manner and the peculiar idioms of a foreign language, that his presence was rather endured as a necessary evil, which the hospitable customs of that part of the country imposed, than esteemed as an honour or a gratification. was thus on her that the task devolved of entertaining the unwelcome guest, and a more dangerous one for a girl of her age and disposition could not well be imagined. As the strength of the invalid returned, their walks became longer, and their intercourse more confidential.

Valiera was not without hopes of being recalled by the voice of his country to the situation from which the faithless tyrant had driven him; he described the resources still possessed by the patriots, the spirit that still existed, although unfelt and unseen, and which would burst out like a concealed flame from one end of the country to the other, on the first opportunity. He dwelt in glowing terms on the valour of his comrades, their adventures, more like the relations of fiction than any thing his hearer had met with before in real life, the customs and manners of the people, and the beauty of the land of his youth, till the fair valleys and vineclothed hills of romantic Spain became the very home of Leslie's imagination. Their rambles now became so frequent and so long, that Mr. Stuart became seriously alarmed, not for his daughter's heart, but for her soul. never happened to occur to him, that there was any danger of Leslie's interpreting in a more improper manner than the aunt, the command to love one another, but at length the dread of that proselytism, which he knew to be a distinguishing feature of the Beast, took hold of him, and he determined to get rid of the insidious guest as speedily as possible. The task was not difficult, for Valiera was proud, and had already more than suspected that he was not altogether a welcome visitor. More than once he had formed a resolution to take leave of his stern and haughty entertainer on the following day, but there was always something in the eyes of Leslie which seemed to plead for a delay, or at least to excuse it, and he deferred it till the next. The next came-but Leslie had engaged him to walk; and that day she looked so beautiful! At length, no longer able to conceal from himself, or to en-

date, the cold superciliousness with which he was treated by the master of the house, and which was more studiously shown one day when Leslie was absent, with a swelling heart the forlorn stranger thanked Mr. Stuart for the hospitable asylum he had offered him, and declared his intention of taking his leave in the morning. His host received this appoundement with a polite formality of regret which but thinly concealed his satisfaction, and the indignant Spaniard left his presence with a suffocating sense of the humiliation he had submitted to. by remaining a single day in the house after he had discovered the real sentiments of its master. It was in this mood he met Leslie when returning from a visit in the neighbourhood. He was very pale, being still really weak and unwell, but to Leslie it seemed more the paleness of anger than disease, for the strife of painful and contending feelings had given a character of fierceness to his countenance, she had never before witnessed. With a brief and almost stern salutation he passed on; Leslie paused, and gazed after him for a moment in consternation; her first impulse was to follow, but wounded pride giving strength to feminine reserve checked her steps, and she turned tearfully away. The next moment she heard quick footsteps behind her, and Valiera was at her side. While his

heart seemed almost bursting with contending emotions, he declared what had passed; he mentioned his determination to set out the next morning to follow his fortunes, whatever they might be, in the world,—and 'but for you,' he continued, seizing her hand, which he pressed convulsively to his bosom, 'angel of my life, but for you, I should care little what becomes of me! Since your pitying smile first streamed on my soul I have felt a new life within me; new hopes -new motives have arisen on the very ruins of those which had passed away! I have called no longer on death; I cursed no more the weak instincts of nature which aided my escape from destruction, to prolong a wretched existence amidst the degradation of my country, an outcast and a beggar, to carry abroad into the land of the free a name which is now a stigma and a reproach, a hissing and a scorn among the nations!' The voice of the impetuous Spaniard was here choked with his emotion, and he suddenly dropped the hand he had taken, and turned away his head, as if unworthy in his forlorn and dishonoured state even to touch so pure and beautiful a creature. Poor Leslie, the very child of nature, ignorant of the forms of the world, and as innocent as ignorant, with a faultering voice bade him be calm-spoke of hope, and better fortune, and happier days-but finally dropped her

head on his shoulder and wept long and bitterly. They were on the very spot where he had once lain motionless and bleeding at her feet—the light of a September moon was reflected from the smooth waters of the loch that lay in breathless tranquillity before them—no voice but their own was heard along the solitary shore—all was peaceful and serene—and their own unquiet bosoms at length felt the soothing influence of the hour. It was here they plighted their troth to one another in the presence of the God of nature, to be true in calm and in storm, in sunshine and in darkness; and without forming a single plan for the future, hardly indulging a single hope definite enough to be turned to words, they went home-young heedless hearts! happy in one another's love, and resolving to wait the turns of fortune as patiently as they might. The next day Valiera informed Mr. Stuart, that although circumstances did not yet permit him to leave that part of the country, he was unwilling to intrude longer on his hospitality, and had therefore engaged an apartment in a cottage at some distance. With many expressions of gratitude, which indeed at that moment hesincerely felt, the Spaniard then took his leave, notwithstanding a faint invitation to prolong his stay from Miss Stuart, who had in some sort become accustomed to his presence, although a foreigner and a papist, and who therefore felt the kind of weak reluctance to part with him which affects such characters, on the proposed removal even of a disagreeable object on which their eyes have habitually dwelt. After almost exhausting his slender funds in gratuities to the servants, which were made rather with reference to his former than his present situation, Valiera removed, with the few articles of which he was still master, to his new abode. It was a little cottage somewhat neater than the generality of 'Highland homes,' situated on a wild romantic spot almost two miles distant from Mr. Stuart's house. of which it commanded a view. His hostess was an elderly woman, without husband or children. The former had been dead many years, and the last of the latter, a fine youth, his mother's only support, was the victim with whose life the deliverance of Valiera had been purchased. The feelings of the poor woman after the fatal night seemed to have completely changed; she went frequently to inquire after Valiera when he was still confined to bed, and subsequently had talked to Leslie with much interest and curiosity about his affairs and prospects. She was overjoyed, when at length he offered to become an inmate of her humble abode; and although she had hitherto constantly refused the little presents which, even in the extremity

of his poverty, he would have forced on her, now cheerfully took what he gave-not for herself, as she told Leslie, but that she might be able to make the 'poor lad' comfortable.

It will not be supposed that a distance of two miles could effectually separate the lovers; and indeed there had been no formal injunction given on the part of her father, to make Leslie very scrupulous on the subject. These meetings, however, although not strictly stolen, were generally without Mr. Stuart's knowledge: he was too much engaged with the business of his estate and the care of his soul to inquire very minutely how his daughter passed her time; and Miss Stuart being a mere domestic drudge, and withal none of the brightest either in judgment or imagination, Leslie had plenty of leisure for her rambles, of which it was noticed she became extravagantly fond. But her father's suspicions were at length aroused; and he found some employment for her at home. Without hinting at the cause, he more frequently requested her company in his rides round the farm, and, as if accidentally, entrusted some little matters of female economy to her management, which before had fallen to the lot of her aunt. She had occasionally for some days no opportunity of seeing Valiera, who on his part was distracted by a thousand doubts and fears. His greatest plea-

sure at such times, was in hovering about the house after night-fall, to catch, if possible, a glimpse of her form as she passed across the room; and then he would hasten home to watch the light brought into her apartment when she retired for the night, which he could see distinctly from his little tower on the hill. He had in the mean time entered into correspondence with some friends of Spain in London, who transmitted him from time to time accounts of the state of affairs in that distracted country. A ray of hope at length illumined the dark horizon, and he began to think that his country had yet a chance of re-assuming her place in the rank of nations; the intelligence gradually became more favourable, and at length the moment arrived, a decisive effort was resolved on, and Valiera was called once more to the battles of freedom, to join those comrades in array, among whom he had been considered one of their best and bravest. and who, even in the darkest time,

## "Though faint and few, were fearless still."

His next interview with Leslie took place the same evening. It would be useless even were it possible to trace the chain of argument by which he justified to himself the wild and daring proposal he now made. It would be more charitable to

suppose that it burst from him in the madness of passion; and that the unhappy girl, while listening to the ravings of his love and his despair, bound herself almost unconsciously to an act, from which in her calmer judgment she would have recoiled with horror. But be this how it may, Leslie Stuart consented from that day to share his desperate fortunes, and to accompany him to the country he was now to enter sword in hand, and from which but a little while ago he had been hunted like a beast of the forest.

On that very evening it was necessary to take their passage in a coasting vessel to the port from which they were to embark for Spain, after having been previously united according to the forms of the church. It was arranged that Valeira should be in waiting, with a boat from the vessel, at the cliffs opposite the house, as soon as it became dark; and the signal of his arrival there was to be a light placed on the ridge of a rock visible from the windows. Leslie's appearance and manner during the painful interval that ensued, were such as seriously to alarm her fa-Her face was flushed, and her eye wild and unsteady; she wandered from room to room as if seeking something she could not find; while a single word was able to move her either to extravagant mirth, or to the bitterest weeping,

Her supposed illness was favourable to her escape, for as night approached, her father insisted on her retiring to bed. He conducted her himself to the door of the apartment; she instinctively bent her head to receive the usual benediction, and with uplifted hands he invoked the blessings of the Most High on the slumbers of his child; then, embracing her with more than usual tenderness, left her alone-with her own heart. She listened to his receding steps till the last fell faintly on her ear, and then pressing her hand on her burning forehead, leaned for some moments against the door. She was alone, and it was now dark; strange phantoms seemed in her disordered imagination to be hovering and gliding around; she dreaded to turn her eyes, lest they should fall on some pale face gazing at her through the gloom in menace or in pity; and when at length she would have moved into the room, she sunk almost fainting to the ground, as a part of her dress, entangled by the door, presented to her guilty fears the idea of some spectral hand drawing her back. She gained the garden however uninterrupted, from whence she was obliged to steal along the side of the house, where was the apartment occupied at the moment by her father and aunt. She determined, while passing the window, to stoop down and glide noiselessly along, but an inclination she could

not resist, to see her father once more, compelled her to turn her head. The curtains were undrawn, and she could see them both in conversation. The large Family Bible was before her father, and turned up at the blank leaf at the beginning, where it is customary to write the names of the husband and wife, and of the children as they are born and taken away. Leslie softened and almost wept, for she thought of her mother, who had died many years before; but her heart was hardened again, and she went on. When she came in sight of the rock all was yet dark; he had not arrived, and she paused for an instant. An idea that had occurred to her while standing at the window now flashed across her mind. The churchyard, where was the buryingplace of her family, was not far off, and she thought she would go and look once more at her mother's grave. She glided swiftly along the well-known path, and in a few minutes stood by the side of the cold marble. The wind sighed heavily through the long grass that waved around the mansions of the dead, and Leslie's heart died within her at the melancholy sound,-" Have I ventured here," said she, "have I dared-" a crowd of agonizing recollections rushed into her mind, and she knelt down by the side of the grave-" O mother, forgive and pity me!" she said, leaning her head on the stone which covered

her lost parent—but a sound at the instant from the shore reached her ear, as if purposely sent to disturb the better feelings which began to steal over her heart. She raised her head; the moon had emerged for a moment from the dark gulf of clouds, in which her beams had hitherto been buried, and threw a bright but wavering radiance on the church-yard. The sudden light seemed, to Leslie's excited imagination, to be an answer or a warning from her mother; and the shadows of the tall tombstones appeared to flit before her eyes with a spectral indistinctness. Not daring to cast another glance on her mother's grave, she rose up, and, averting her head, moved hastily along; but her foot coming in contact with a part of the stone, she fell with her face to the ground. When she recovered from the stupor occasioned by her terror and pain, the moon was again shrouded in clouds, the night was darker than ever; and it was with some difficulty she made her way through the tombstones. At last she gained the path leading down to the rocks. The light was now visible, and her heart beat quickly-but the next moment it disappeared! yet she continued to run on with breathless haste. When she approached near the rocks, she saw it again, and her fainting spirits revived; but just when she had gained the beach, a sound from behind fell upon her ear, and turning her head

with an involuntary motion, she saw the appearance of a human figure behind her, in the direction of the church-yard. Fear gave wings to her speed, and she rushed forward with blind impetuosity. She was now on the rocks—yet the light seemed still dim and distant; the sea-weed slipped from beneath her feet, and yet she still bounded along. At length the hissing of the water suddenly rose upon her car as she reached the edge of the cliff, and another step would have plunged her into the deep, had she not at the instant been dragged back by a grasp that seemed almost super-human.

"Down on your knees," cried her preserver, in a voice which, in the bewildered state of her mind, by this time verging almost on insanity, she with difficulty recognized to be that of her nurse; "down on your knees, and bless God for having permitted you to be withheld from rushing into his presence with a mortal sin in your thoughts." But Leslie heeded not—scarcely heard—her words; her eyes were still bent wildly on the receding light, as it floated far over the dark and troubled waters of the loch, till at length, accustomed to the gloom, they could discern the form of the distant vessel, into which the fatal meteor seemed to disappear.

The temporary state of unconsciousness, produced by her fall at her mother's grave, had con-

tinued longer than she suspected. The Spaniard had waited at the rocks till the last moment allowed him, and even when at length he was forced to permit the impatient sailors to row back to the vessel, he had kept the light still burning at the stern, and listened with feverish anxiety for some sound from the shore, which might indicate that his mistress had been unfaithful to her appointment rather from accidental delay than design.

Leslie was now slowly supported along the shore towards the path which led up to her forsaken home. At one place the steps of her preserver became more slow, and almost as weak as her own; at last she stopped short, and turned round with her face to the sea. Leslie felt her arm pressed convulsively in her nurse's grasp, while an universal shudder seemed to run through her frame. "It was here!" she whispered at last, in a tone in which grief and horror seemed to struggle for the mastery. " I see his face on the brow of that gloomy wave, just as it appeared in the red torch-light, when the eyes of my beautiful boy turned for the last time to the land from which he was fast gliding. It was me they sought! It was his mother he would once more have beheld -and he found me-his last look met mine as he disappeared on the wave—my bairn! my: bairn!" The poor woman's voice was choked

with her maternal feelings, while thus lamenting her last and only son; she wrung her hands in an agony of grief, and at last throwing her head on Leslie's shoulder, wept bitterly. This affecting incident recalled Leslie to herself; in her turn she became the comforter and supporter, and forgetting for a season her own griefs, mingled her tears with those of the bereaved mother. No human being, except her nurse, knew of the transactions or intentions of that unhappy evening; she succeeded in gaining her own room without discovery, and the severe illness brought on by the state of her mind was attributed to other causes.

In a few days her nurse received a letter addressed to Leslie, she well could guess from whom. It was dated at the town from which Valiera was to take his passage to Spain, and contained only the following hurried lines, written apparently in great agitation.

"Leslie! Do you forgive me—or do you hate and scorn me? The phrenzy into which I drove your gentle spirit must now have subsided, and you must see in its true colour the guilt that would have urged you to destruction. But still pity me, Leslie, for I am more an object of pity than of hatred. The dreams that hung round my soul like a spell, as if peculiar to your own

romantic land, fled at the instant my foot touched the deck, on my return to the vessel. I shuddered at my own madness and baseness, and on my knees returned thanks to Almighty God for your escape. Farewell, Leslie! The veil has fallen from my eyes. The delusive hopes, which were till now a part of my existence, are no more. Spain will yet be free; but in another age, and her deliverance will be wrought by other hands. But nevertheless, I go where I am called, not to conquer, but to die; and with my latest breath, I will bless the merciful providence which preserved you from a fate so terrible as you must have endured, the persecuted and insulted widow of

Your lost but still adoring

D' ALMEIRA.

The forebodings of the Spaniard were speedily realized; he had not even the satisfaction of striking a blow for his ungrateful and miserable country, being taken and shot immediately on his landing.

## GUERILLA BROTHERS.

A FEW years ago, as at the present moment, a French army was in the heart of Spain. Another cycle of destiny had gone round, and the giant tread of Napoleon echoed along the track in which the Roman, the Goth, and the Moor had successively preceded him. But although Spain was conquered, the Spaniards were still unsubdued. The spirit of chivalry which at one time shed a romantic lustre over the name of this unhappy people, seemed to rekindle for a moment in the day of their degradation; and the annals of those desperate struggles which ensued, afford examples of high enthusiasm and heroic valour, which seem to belong rather to the history of former times than to the dark and blotted page of the present. Not only in those

districts where confidence was inspired by numbers, or by the countenance of distinguished leaders, or where nearer contiguity to the scene of action exposed the inhabitants, more directly, to all the horrors of conquest, converting courage into desperation, and mingling the loftier impulses of patriotism with feelings of private exasperation and revenge; but in her remotest provinces Spain felt the electric shock, and the same spirit of indignant resistance, as if at one instant, ran through the whole kingdom. Every village had its band of faithful defenders, every valley poured forth its hardy peasantry, and every pass, among the hills was guarded by men born within their shadow. Many of the nobles and proprietors summoned their dependants to the field; and headed them in person; or what was more frequently the case, individuals of lower rank, by personal prowess and good fortune, acquired the confidence of their comrades, and drew around them the brave and adventurous of all classes, who were thus formed into the independent bands, known by the name of Guerillas.

Prompt, active, and indefatigable, acquainted from infancy with every inch of the ground, stimulated by public honour, and goaded into phrensy by private wrongs, it is no wonder that those bands should have proved the powerful instruments they did in the deliverance of their country, -and indeed it may be a question whether England, unassisted by such co-operation, might not have poured in vain for a century to come her devoted thousands into this Golgotha of the brave. It will be remembered by those who attended to the details of the peninsular war, that a party of these irregular troops, under Don Alonzo de Merida, exhibited a signal instance of the use to which a force of this kind may be applied, by interrupting, during a very important period, the advance of a body of the French army while defiling through a narrow pass in the Sierra The exploit was performed with only a trifling loss on the part of the Guerillas, but one of their number fell on the occasion, whose fate was attended by circumstances of too peculiar and interesting a nature to be easily forgotten. He was one of two brothers who had volunteered into the band at the time it was first formed, and whose singular deportment had strongly excited the curiosity of their comrades, even in that stirring and eventful time. That they were brothers could not be doubted; their consanguinity was stamped in every line of their countenances, and their ages appeared to be so nearly nlike that it was believed they were twins. thers then, twin-brothers, following the same fortunes, sharing the same dangers, and reaping the same glory, it may be supposed that a fraternity of soul also must have been induced, and that unknown and unfriended as they were, the children of the same cradle would have clung to each other with even a warmer and more confiding regard than the friendship of high-minded and generous youth. In place, however, of this being the case, a strange mysterious reserve seemed to govern their mutual intercourse. One might have taken them to be strangers, for they seldom exchanged words, and never the courtesies of acquaintanceship; but the deep and earnest looks they bent on each other, even in the midst of battle, of flight, or of pursuit, seemed to speak volumes of intelligence. A superficial observer, too, might have sometimes believed them to be enemies; but there was nothing of the bitterness or the hypocrisy of hatred, either in their silence or their looks; and on one or two occasions. a burst of natural feeling was seen to break through the cold and gloomy exterior they had assumed.

Even among the desperate adventurers of whom Merida's band was composed, the brothers were noted for a daring courage,—if courage it may be termed which sets every calculation of danger at defiance; but no community of feeling could be traced between them and the associates of their perils; they seemed to be altogether uninfluenced by the motives which in such circum-

stances actuate other men—no cry of liberty was ever heard from their lips,—no smile of glutted vengeance ever shed its horrid light over their still features. Among their other peculiarities was observed an utter indifference to beauty; and this could not escape being a very remarkable trait in the character of young and handsome cavaliers, at a period when scenes of the most romantic adventure were every-day occurrences,—when the silence of night was broken by the shrieks of women,—and when the wandering Guerilla so often felt the blood which flowed in their defence mixed with their tears.

These singularities of disposition were ascribed by their comrades to different causes. some, particularly of the younger class, believed that an unfortunate passion, antecedent to their joining the corps, had thrown a gloom over their existence, others, with more seeming probability, attributed the effect to the conflict of religious zeal with patriotic enthusiasm, which, during that period, was observed to influence the conduct of some members of the ecclesiastical body. These set the brothers down as monks who had still retained in their cloisters some of the lofty feelings which once distinguished the high-born Spaniard; and who, when liberated by the hand of war, perhaps driven from their seclusion by sacrilegious violence, though distracted by religious scruples, yet dreaded more the degradation of their country. Such a supposition, if true, would have accounted not merely for their general gloomy austerity of manner, but for their particular disinclination to the society of females; and for the silence they observed with regard to their family and province. Yet neither this nor the former could bear more than superficial inquiry; for those who remembered their first entrance into the band described their appearance as very different, either from that of militant priests or disconsolate lovers. Strong in youthful confidence, and glowing with a generous ardour, they had at first taken their station in the ranks of war, like gallants arrayed for the chase. By degrees their confidence appeared to forsake them, their ardour became different from that instinctive impulse which prompts on young and fearless hearts to court danger for the very honour of opposing it; mistrust and suspicion usurped the place of fraternal affection; a cold reserve locked up in their bosoms every kindred sympathy; their noble emulation degenerated into a desperate and unnatural rivalship; -- even in the mad career of victory their enthusiasm seemed to bear some reference to the impenetrable thought which governed their destiny, and at length the fact became certain, from repeated observation, that the

one only rushed into danger that the other might be forced, by some secret compact, to follow.

Without entering into any detail of the state of affairs at this juncture, in the quarter to which Merida's attention was more particularly directed, it will only be necessary to observe, that it had for some time been the principal object of the Spaniards to prevent the attempted junction of a large force of the enemy with their main body.

A skilful manœuvre of the French general, however, rendered all their plans abortive; and it was with the utmost surprise, that even the lynx-eyed Merida received intelligence of the invader's being actually on the march, without opposition. There was still a point at which it was possible, even for so small a body as his, at least to annoy and embarrass their progress, if he could not altogether succeed in gaining time for his countrymen to redeem their error; and this spot the intrepid Guerilla reached by a forced march, at almost the same moment with the enemy.

In one of the wildest solitudes of the Sierra Morena, a deep glen runs east and west, as if cutting asunder the dark chain of mountains. At the eastern end it narrows into a steep and rugged path, confined by masses of rock, which appear in some former age to have tumbled from the sides. This is the pass of San Josefo, alluded

F 4

to above. It was on a still evening in August, that in this sequestered scene was presented the magnificent spectacle of an army of many thousand men winding in regular order through the glen, the monotony of their slow and measured tread broken only by the deep voices of the officers, directing the order of the march, and by the impatient echoes that seemed eagerly passing from one to another the hostile sound, as if conscious that there were those at hand who hearkened anxiously for the expected signal of revenge and slaughter. Already a portion of the foremost division had cleared the dangerous pass, and their leader had begun to congratulate himself on his own prudence, and the want of vigilance in the Spaniards, when suddenly a sound was heard like the rushing of a tempest, the mountain above their head appeared in motion, and huge masses of rock descended with terrible rapidity on the intruders. In addition to the confusion produced by this unexpected attack, the narrow pass was almost choked up by the stones, heaps of earth, and branches and trunks of trees, which continued to thunder down the cliff; while the terrific shouts of the Guerillas above, repeated on all sides by the echoes of the glen, exaggerated their numbers a thousand-fold in the imaginations of the enemy. With the impetuous gallantry however of French soldiers,

they still continued to rush forward, clambering among the rocks, and among the crushed and mangled bodies of their comrades, firing at random into the trees which concealed their assailants.

The Guerillas, emboldened by success, and rendered furious by the taste of vengeance, at length descended the mountain so far as to be seen, in many instances, fighting hand to hand with the foremost of the intruders; who in turn pursued them up the rocks, and thus commenced a desperate and bloody struggle, in which every thought of individual preservation seemed to be discarded. The sacred watch-word of 'Liberty and Spain,' coupled with the shrill cry of vengeance, seemed to proceed from the lips of demons rather than of men; some were seen leaning far over the precipice, supported only by the branch of a tree which they grasped with one hand, while with the other they hewed their enemy below in pieces; and others, when mastered by numbers or superior strength, seized the conqueror in their arms, and dragged him over the cliffs, drowning with wild laughter his groans and imprecations, as they both rolled from rock to rock, and were at last buried in one bloody grave among the stones and loose earth at the bottom.

Among those who distinguished themselves

most in this fearful conflict, were the Guerilla Brothers. One of them in particular appeared to be the directing genius of the slaughter; wherever the fight was thickest, there he was foremost; wherever the most fearful odds were to be encountered, there his dripping sword flashed terror and death-the Guerillas themselves eved him with wonder, as he sprung unhurt from rock to rock, skimming along the extremest edge of the precipice, now disappearing among the trees, and then rising again into view at a different point of the conflict, like an avenging spirit, ascending out of the mountain to require a bloody atonement for the wrongs of Spain. No watch-word, however, was heard from his lips; no answering looks of interest or encouragement met the gaze of his comrades; at every cessation of actual struggle, his eyes were turned towards his brother, who although severely wounded almost at the commencement of the engagement, was still sometimes seen by his side, but more frequently toiling after him in his furious career, vainly struggling to gain the place which the fierce and haughty glances of the other seemed to dare him to take. The signal for retreat had now sounded, and the Guerillas, according to their mode of warfare, were beginning suddenly to separate, each taking a different route to their common rendezvous, thus

melting away at once before the eyes of the baffled enemy, and eluding his grasp, just at the moment when fresh reinforcements from the glen assured him of being able to annihilate their slender force at a blow. The foremost Guerilla. still unwounded, relinquished his prey at the sound, and, dashing into the trees, had began to re-ascend the mountain, when the clash of arms induced him to turn out of his path-and the next moment he beheld his brother, pale, bleeding, and almost exhausted, sinking under the bayonet of a French soldier. There are scenes which no power of language can portray; whose spirit is utterly beyond the reach of the most admirable pencil, or the most eloquent pen; whose effect consists not in action, or in attitude. or in colouring. Who can paint the rushing and the conflict at the same instant, of a thousand opposite and contending feelings-crowd into a moment's space the memory of years, and the desires of a life-time-infuse into the expression of a single glance, love, friendship, hatred, hope, fear, pity-all things that can warm, or chill, or melt, or madden the human heart? A single blow could yet save him-but one bound, and his interposing arm would preserve the life of the son of his own mother—a single shout from his lips would scare away the slayer from his purpose.

Who can tell what were the feelings of that moment, which changed his flushed cheek to the ashy hue of death—which rooted to the gory earth the feet that would not fly to save a brother—which clenched in iron compression that hand that refused its aid to the companion of his cradle—which rendered dumb the tongue that would not even say to the comrade of his glory, Live for Spain!'

It was but a moment—but one moment—the next, the living statue started from his trance of horror—the blade quivered in his grasp—the blood rushed into his guilty face—and he sprung with a terrible shout to the rescue. It was too late—the blow had descended; the dying Spaniard turned his face toward his brother, and they exchanged one look—the last.

The sun had gone down, and its light slowly faded from the ridges of San Josefo; the long array of armed men had passed by like a pageant in a dream, the last echo of their heavy tread had died away among the mountains, and all things were silent, except the carrion birds that already screamed hoarsely over the unburied dead. The Guerilla's eyes were still fixed on the lifeless eyes of his brother, which seemed to retain their expression, even after the spirit that had animated them was fled, while the other features, changing from the beauty of yet early

youth into the ghastliness of death, appeared in that dim and doubtful light to assume a thousand unearthly shapes of terror, anger, pity, and grinning mockery.

In this position were the brothers found by the Guerillas, when they returned to bury their dead. They dug a grave on the spot for their slain comrade, but were obliged by main force to tear the survivor from the body. He now held in his hand a miniature portrait, suspended by a richly wrought gold chain, apparently taken from the neck of his brother, and which, by the derangement of his dress, they had opportunity to observe corresponded exactly with one he wore himself. These relics appeared, even in his present state, to be objects of the most jealous care. Among many incoherent words he muttered, were the names of Guzman and Leonora, the former addressed to his brother, and the latter to some phantom of his fevered brain; but nothing transpired which at that time could lead to the knowledge of his family or story. It was only after a long and desperate resistance that he permitted the Guerillas to deposit the body in the grave they had prepared; his cries appalled the hearts even of that desperate crew, and the sentinels of the distant army crossed themselves, as the sound, borne on the night breeze that had now arisen, fell on their wakeful ear. The unhappy

Guerilla was taken to one of the few remaining convents among the hills, which the footsteps of violation and sacrilege had not yet entered, where he received every attention from the pious inmates, which his case required. Many months, however, elapsed before either his mind or body had acquired sufficient strength to admit of his going once more into the scenes of the world. But he was yet in the early summer of his days, and his crushed spirit by degrees regained somewhat of its buoyancy, and the pulse of youthful hope still beat, though faintly, in his bosom. One day he was missed from the chapel of the convent, at the time he had devoted, ever since the return of his reason, to penitence and prayer. Another day passed, and he came not; another. and another. It cannot now be known whether, in some wandering of mind, he had strayed from his hospitable friends, and with the instinct which carries the dove, through unknown paths, to her distant home, had reached the valley in which the years of his boy-hood had been spent; or whether some latent hope, some deep and lonely feeling, which even the ruins of his reason had not overwhelmed, and the blood of his brother could not drown, had guided him back-like that bright and solitary star, to which the eyes of the mariner turn so fondly, on the wild and midnight sea. But he did return; and, long

after the above transactions took place, the writer of the present brief memoir was enabled to find a clue to the mystery in this young man's conduct, which before could only be guessed at.

Strange, indeed, must the path of his return have appeared even to a more accustomed foot; for his way was along the track of a conquering army, which had left the print of its footsteps in blood and ashes. The guitar and the castanet were silent in the plains, the vineyards were deserted, the scowl of suspicion glanced from every cottage, and the wild stare of famine was in the sunken eyes of childhood. It was yet daylight when he arrived; but the sun was just sinking behind the hills, which shut in from the world a spot so dear to the recollections of his youth, and now so terribly important to the hopes of his future years.

The light fell softly on the house he had come to seek—its well-known gardens, the trees, the walks—all things appeared unchanged. The Guerilla approached with a rapid step, but turned suddenly short before he had gained the door. I will not scare her," muttered he, "with this haggard visage, in the blessed light of day!" and he retired to a distance, from which he might see the house without being perceived. Before it became dark, he had visited every spot associated with the remembrance of former times;

but more as a penance than a pleasure; for the thought of his slain brother pursued him through them all—his form seemed to beckon from the shadows of the trees; and when he would have rested his trembling limbs in the arbours, the seats, like those of Macbeth, 'were full.'

The last beams of day had at length faded in the valley, although they still gilded with a rich crimson tint the summits of the hills, and he again approached the house. But, unlike the others that were now buried in the shades of night, he was astonished to perceive lights-almost in every window. He became sick and faint, for the thought struck him that Leonora was dead; and for some time he had not resolution to go in, but still continued to wander at a distance about the precincts, like some guilty spirit, forbidden to enter within the circle. After some time longer had elapsed, during which he probably experienced many of the bitterest feelings which it is the lot of man to endure, a sound reached him from the illumined dwelling —it might be the tinkling of the bell, he thought, used in the ceremonies of religion, or the first swell of the hymn which rises for the dead. At length a louder hum stole on the night-air, and starting from the ground on which he had thrown himself in his agony, he rushed with impetuous haste to the house—for it was the sound of music and of mirth! A dreadful suspicion flashed on his mind, as he recognized an air commonly used in that province on occasions of nuptialfêtes.

A gay and splendid bridal party were indeed assembled in the house, who seemed, in their extravagant mirth, determined to enjoy at least one night of festivity amidst the desolation of their country. The music and the dance were at their highest, when a confused sound from the porch reached the hall-loud voices were then heard in the anti-room, the music ceased, the dancers stopped short in their career, and a figure burst suddenly into the apartment, so pale, so haggard, so unlike the form of a living man, that it might have seemed, to that startled party, some reproving spirit, conjured up by their illtimed mirth, from a deep and bloody grave. All shrunk back aghast-except the bride, who fixed her eyes on the unexpected guest, while a deathlike paleness overspread her countenance. "Leonora!" said the Guerilla; she started, stepped forward as if by an incontrollable impulse, then suddenly paused, as if transfixed by some hideous recollection. With a trembling hand the Guerilla undid the gold chains, and bending down, laid the two portraits—both portraits of herself -at her feet; then, rising slowly, cast one long and melancholy look on the original, and saying, in a subdued and broken voice, while he crossed his hands on his bosom, "It is just!" turned round and left the apartment.

In vain the music resumed its loudest and wildest strains; in vain the dancers mingled again in the whirl; in vain the bridegroom lent his soothing and caresses. The impression made on Leonora de M———, by that dismal scene, was never effaced.

The two brothers had loved her with the most violent and impetuous passion, and she, though secretly preferring him who had just stood before her, in a romantic spirit of patriotism, had vowed that he only should obtain her love, who went forth to the battles of her insulted country, and returned with the brightest laurels; if either should fall, the survivor was to bring as a token the portrait which, with her own hand, she bound round his neck.

The news of the skirmish of San Josefo had been accompanied with intelligence of the death of both brothers, probably owing to neither having been again seen in the band; and on this night, with the tears scarcely dry on her cheek, she had yielded an indifferent hand to the solicitations and menaces of her relations.

With regard to the Guerilla, nothing more was known with certainty of his fate; but the body of a man, answering his description, was

found long after on the ridge of a distant hill, which overlooks the scene he had quitted. Some earth was thrown over the remains, and a rude cross raised, according to the custom of the country, to mark the spot signalized by the guilt of man, or the vengeance of heaven.

## THE

## WAY TO RISE;

OB,

## THE CUNNINGE CLERK.

About sixty years ago (for this history is silent as to the exact date) there dwelt in the town of Greenelm, situated on the west coast of Scotland, a certain merchant named Duncan Menzies, its most distinguished inhabitant. He was a trader in extensive business, having the entire ownership of two coasting vessels, besides a large share in a three-masted West-Indiaman, that was seen regularly once a year sweeping up the river, laden with the produce of another zone, and putting to shame with her white lofty sails, as she drew in towards the quay, the humbler craft, whose uncouth-looking hulls and sooty

canvas crowded the port. Mr. Menzies, or Mingus, as it was pronounced, was not only the richest merchant, but at the time we take up our tale, had attained the highest civil dignity, in the place, viz. that of baillie or chief magistrate; he was also an elder of the kirk, an office, as it is managed in Scotland, of no small ecclesiastical dignity; and withal held the military rank of captain in the Greenelm militia. These honours, however, were not all of the Baillie's seeking, they rather devolved upon him as a necessary concomitant of his rising fortune, and he submitted to their infliction accordingly. We do not mean to say that he was not proud of all and each of them, but there were some points attending them, and more particularly the time those different duties deducted from what was formerly devoted to his peculiar affairs,—which to use his own expression were fashious. Even at the proudest of his official moments, too, there was a feeling of awkwardness he could not overcome, which damped the satisfaction he might be expected to feel. It was, for instance, with something amounting almost to shame, that he made his way through the crowd of urchins assembled at the door to see the Baillie issue forth in his regimentals when the militia were on duty; and on such occasions it was observed that he frequently reached the rendezvous in a more profuse perspiration than either the weather or the distance accounted for. Neither was he at perfect ease when, in the magisterial character, he was marshalled to church on the sabbath by two halberdiers dressed in red coats, the council following at a respectful distance, and the procession brought up by the town-crier. when standing at the plate in his capacity of elder, there was something annoying in being stuck up for the gaze of the public when every other christian was allowed to pass quietly on, and in being constrained for half an hour together, with the polite humility esteemed decorous in a servant of the poor, to bob his head to every dull tinkle which the halfpence made as they descended into the pewter basin. But the counting-house was his proper element; there he found himself at home, and with his short thick pen firmly compressed between his lips, his squat figure in a well worn coatie, or short coat, of a snuff colour, and a ruler in his left hand, which it was his custom to retain, even after leaving the desk, he felt himself a man of more consequence, and actually commanded more respect, than when surrounded by the pomp and circumstance of official dignity. There was at that time only one quay in Greenelm, which ran out from the side of the wharf or breast, a considerable distance into the sea, and forming a curve towards

the end, confined the shipping in a pretty secure and commodious basin. At the entrance of the quay, and only separated from it by the breadth of the street, stood the Baillie's house, a large three-storied tenement, about two thirds of which were devoted to business, and the remainder to domestic purposes. It was distinguished from the rest of the houses in the street by its greater height, and by a huge beam, which projected from the highest window of the warehouse somewhat in the form of a gallows; from this beam depended a thick rope, which, to the eye of an inlander, must have added to the sinister appearance of the machine; but in the iron clicks at the end, and the blocks at the upper part, a denizen of the coast might recognise that sort of tackle by which heavy goods are hoisted into the warehouse. The affairs of the counting-house were managed, under the master's superintendance, by a youth whose name was Watt Lee, a distant relation of the late Mrs. Menzies, (for the Baillie was now a widower,) and who was permitted to look forward to a share in the concern. The domestic economy was under the sole direction of an only daughter, misnomered May, for her name should have been April. She was a fair-haired, blue-eyed, clear-complexioned, Scottish lassie, as gay as the lark singing in the morning sun, and as sweet, and modest, and

graceful, as the primrose of the spring. She was the light of her father's eye, and the pride of his heart, and so complete was her dominion over his affection, that, in the common phrase, she could have turned the old man round her finger. Her power over the Baillie was often a source of great comfort to Watt Lee, who, although clever and steady in the main, was apt to take 'camsteerie fits,' as his master termed them. In fact, he was somewhat self-willed on all occasions; but, except in the said fits, contrived to gain his end by artful manœuvres rather than open rebellion, so much so indeed, as frequently to appear to give in with unwillingness into schemes which he had himself suggested. The firmness of the youth's character, at length, in some measure, got the mastery over the milkier soul of his master, and except on great occasions, when the wrath of the latter was raised to a pitch which the clerk did not think prudent to tempt further, May was rather the mediator between two rival powers, than a pleader for mercy in favour of the weaker party. Her mediation very seldom failed of its effect, for she was as powerful with Watt Lee as with her father. Whether it was gratitude for her kind offices which had ripened into a warmer attachment, or

Accident, blind contact, or the strong Necessity of loving,

I know not: but Watt did love his cousin (twenty times removed) with a vehemence proportioned to the turbulent strength of his The Baillie was not perfectly satisfied with the evident partiality of the young people. Watt to be sure was come of gentle kin, and was a shrewd active fellow, and by this time well nigh indispensable in the business: but his whole income amounted to no more than fifty pounds per annum, and even that, together with his future prospects, depended on the Baillie himself. The father, too, was proud of his daughter, and thought, perhaps with good reason, that she might aspire to a much higher match: she was the admiration of all the young men of the town, who toasted her health in huge bumpers of rum toddy, after the fashion of Greenelm; and even the strangers, he observed, whom business already brought from far and near to this rising port, threw 'sheep's eyes' at her as she tripped along. More than one of his mercantile correspondents too-good men and warm—who had experienced his hospitality, remembered in their letters the sweetness of the May-flower, as they gallantly termed her, and inquired warmly after her health. No positive declaration, however, had as yet been made by any of her admirers, and the Baillie left the affair to chance or destiny.

Watt Lee was not discouraged either by his own poverty, or the Baillie's sour looks; he was secure of May's affection, and he was determined to marry her. Of this he did not make any secret, but with an impudence peculiar to himself, took every opportunity of insinuating his purpose to his employer. This produced much dissension between them, but at length answered the knave's purpose completely; the wrath of the Baillie became less bitter every time, and at length the dose was repeated so frequently, that it ceased to be offensive, and by degrees, imperceptible to himself, he came to look on Watt Lee as his future son-in-law.

Matters were in this position when the West Indian argosic arrived, and for a while drove all thoughts of his daughter's marriage out of the Baillie's head. Even Watt Lee was so completely engrossed by the multiplicity of business which this event produced, that he saw very little of May till after the discharge of the vessel. At length the bustle was over, and things subsided into their usual state; the ship was laid up in the dock to undergo some repairs; the cargo was shipped off by coasters to other ports, or hoisted into the warehouse; and the counting-house assumed its accustomed appearance of quiet industry. It might almost have been forgotten that such an event had occurred, so

totally were all vestiges of its effects removed or concealed, but for one troublesome memento, which now began to give Watt no little uneasiness. In addition to her usual freightage of rum, coffee, and sugar, the good ship had been charged with a West Indian planter, returning to his native country, to breathe the cooler air of the Scottish coast, for the brief space it might be his fate to breathe at all. He had gone out to push his fortune when very young, and from the meanest offices undertaken by Europeans, had risen to be the possessor of a very considerable plantation, with a sufficient complement of the black cattle used in that quarter of the world for its cultivation.

Now your righteous folk make a deal of noise about the wrongs of the said cattle, and many of them threaten vengeance, both temporal and spiritual, both in this world and that which is to come, against their oppressors; but it seems to us, while we have the figure and face of Mr. Snelldrake before our mind's eye, that they go a little too far. When we see his sharp anxious features covered by what resembles discoloured parchment, every crack and wrinkle of which catalogues, with sickening distinctness, the feelings which have burnt their track as they passed,—the small fiery eye, where the fretfulness of disease and the cowardly malignity of habitual

tyranny combine to throw a hateful light over his countenance—the nerveless frame, shaking almost to dissolution at every breath, which to others carries a cooling and delightful sensation. -the withered limbs hardly able to support the sapless trunk,—all which distinguishes the unhappy wretch who has passed his life in that atmosphere, so fraught both with moral and physical contamination,—we ask ourselves, Has not this man suffered punishment enough? Small as is the white population of the West Indies, compared with that of the black, these fatal islands have cost an infinitely greater expense of human life and human happiness to Europe than to Africa. If the friends of a rational philanthropy, should not look with less indignation on the spectacle of their fellow-creatures, dragged from their home and country into slavery, they should at least look with more pity on the thousands exported from our own shores, strong in youth and high in hope, led by inevitable circumstances, or by the spirit perhaps of laudableadventure, into that pestilential climate where honour cannot breathe, where their body must become a prey to disease and pain, and their soul perish utterly, and for ever.

It was, perhaps, with some faint recollections of the better feelings with which he had set out in life, that Mr. Snelldrake turned his eyes on

May's beautiful and blooming face; his destination was to another part of the country, but day after day he lingered about the fireside of her father, and at length fairly declared to the Baillie his wish to transplant his May-flower into his own hothouse. This proposal was highly flattering, for the West-Indian was a man of very large fortune, and the consignments from his estate to Mr. Menzies' care, made a considerable part of the income derived by the latter from business. Utterly ignorant himself of love as a romantic passion, he could not conceive that his daughter would object to so splendid an alliance, and he rather feared the counsels of Watt Lee, which he knew to be of so much weight even with himself, than the interest he might have acquired in his daughter's heart. To get rid of Watt's addresses with a good grace was the main object; but he was aware of old, that the purposes of his clerk were not very easily set aside, and he could not but confess, that his own silence on the subject, for some time past, might have seemed to imply acquiescence. The new wooer could not comprehend the difficulty at all, when after a good deal of hesitation, the Baillie explained how matters stood.—" Why not turn the fellow off?" said he, in a tone which electrified his father-in-law elect. But the Baillie had not been a negro-driver, and could not be brought to

reconcile his mind to the suggestion; he watched, however, the preceedings of the lovers as closely as possible, and interdicted his daughter with more vehemence of authority than she had ever before witnessed, from maintaining further correspondence with his clerk, than the common forms of civility required. Watt in the mean time made matters no better by his own conduct; for in place of showing the respectful deference to the old West Indian, which his ample fortune so well merited, he took every opportunity to express his dislike and contempt, and so far from abating a jot of his pretensions to the lady, seemed to rise in confidence just in proportion as his prospects appeared to decline. On one occasion in particular, when plying the bottle after dinner, to which he was sometimes invited. he had the audacity to sing, when called upon by some of the company, and with such gestures as would have let even a stranger into its application.

> "There's auld Rob Morris that wons in you glen, The king of gude fellows, the wale of auld men, He has gowd in his coffers, he has owsen and kine, And ae bonnie lassie, his darling and mine."

This effectually roused the Baillie's indignation, for he had but the moment before taken all the pains in the world to hint to his friends that Mr. Snelldrake was an accepted lover of his

daughter. From this moment he determined to \*comply with the advice suggested by the West-Indian's question, but at the same time endeavouring to propitiate his conscience to the arrangement, by resolving, as soon as the marriage should take place, to receive back again his contumacious clerk, and make up for every thing by giving him a share in the business. This was a point which Mr. Snelldrake had most at heart, and not altogether because he feared Watt as a rival, although that would have been quite a sufficient reason, but the contempt with which he was treated by the youth, had begot, in a bosom peculiarly fitted for such guests, a hatred of the most deadly nature. It was an act, however, easier talked of than executed; the Baillie tried it over and over again in his mind, but the difficulty was to manage it so as to have some colour of justice on his side; without this it could not be thought of,-the whole town would cry shame on him. It at last occurred to him, that it would be a very easy matter for him to push some of the disputes, that were of almost daily occurrence between him and his self-willed clerk, just a step or two beyond the point at which they had hitherto terminated.—" His blood will then be up," said he, " and if I am no mista'en in Watt, he'll give me cause enough to

pack him about his business,—and may be a ruler if no a ban at the tail o' him."

Whether it happened that May got some intimation of the line of action determined on by the confederates and gave her lover the hint, or whether the honest Baillie went too inartificially about it, we cannot very well say; but the next morning, when his employer walked into the counting-house with a stately step, and a sour visage, and sate himself down on the opposite side of the desk to watch for cause of offence, he found the usually rampant Watt in a temper so nerfectly angelic, that no christian man could have said a cross-grained word to him. In vain he tried to start some subject on which they might have the good fortune to differ; Watt was of his patron's opinion in every thing. He even ordered him to make an entry which he knew to be wrong, in the books; but Watt, without so much as arguing the matter, although on these points he was particularly ticklish, obeyed without a murmur, and when the Baillie affected to discover the error, took the whole matter on himself, blaming his own precipitation, and erasing the entry with much apparent contrition. In short, the enemy was fairly baffled, and Watt maintained his stool in triumph. The West Indian at length, wearied with the slow progress he was

making in his mistress's affections, and believing that Watt was the only obstacle in his way, determined, though it was sorely against his will, to do his enemy what he considered a service, to em-ploy his interest in obtaining for him such a situation in the West Indies as it would be impossible for a person in his circumstances to refuse. He speedily succeeded in procuring an offer from a respectable house in a neighbouring part, for Watt to go out in their employment, with a handsome salary. This was a sore temptation. In a few years he might realize sufficient to make May his wife in spite of every body, and of her fidelity he had not the slightest doubt. To go, or not to go—that was the question. Watt consulted first with himself, and then with May; and at last when the matter was put to him finally, he answered and said that he had made up his mind and would go. This decision gave great satisfaction to the confederates, and as there was now nothing to fear on his score, he was admitted once more on the same footing in the family from which he had been displaced.

He had thus many opportunities of seeing his beloved May, and passed three happy weeks before the vessel was ready to sail. At length the Baillie's ship, for it was by her he was to take his passage, was once more about to proceed on her voyage, and Watt was ordered to be

ready for going on board the next day. But whether it was owing to grief, for he had a long, and no doubt melancholy, interview with his mistress that day-or to drink, for in the afternoon a deep potation was given him by the Baillie, on the occasion of his bidding farewell, it is hard to say; but in the middle of the night he was to all appearance a dying man. The Baillie was sent for, in his capacity of elder, to administer such consolation as was needful, and found two doctors, one at each side of the bed on which poor Watt lay, as his patron thought, looking fearfully at the men of physic, 'between the devil and the deep sea.' The next day he was somewhat better of the fever, but so low that he scarcely had power to open his eyes. In vain the West Indian declared that the sea-air was the best restorative in the world for his complaint -that he would have plenty of time to recover thoroughly before reaching Jamaica-that, if they now let him alone, when he could open his eyes and think of his situation, he would die of chagrin for having missed such an opportunity of making his fortune-and that death at any rate would be the worst that could happen, if they just lifted him, mattress and all, from his lodging into the cabin. The merchant was inexorable. "Watt." he said. "should not be steer'd. He had no ill-will at the callan, if he

would only let his May alone; and I would rather indeed," continued he, " see them married this minute, than let the puir lad lie there anither hour in siccan a pitifu' fashion." This conversation took place at the patient's bed-side, and, as if awakened into life and sensibility at the name of May, Watt was seen to raise a corner of his eve-lid for the first time. However, much to the West Indian's disquiet, the vessel sailed without her passenger, and, the wind being fair, was soon safely out of the Firth. The next morning the merchant was too busy to go to Watt's lodgings in person, but was glad to learn that he was 'nae waur.' Indeed the poor man was altogether out of sorts, owing to the press of business, of which he was obliged single-handed to endure the brunt, for Watt's successor proved to be a stupid, ignorant fellow, whose service did more harm than good. After roaring himself hoarse, in giving directions that were neither understood nor attended to, he was obliged to go forth on the out-door business, leaving every thing at sixes and sevens in the counting-house, and mightily afraid that he should suffer both in character and purse by the incapacity of his clerk.

When he returned, however, he was agreeably surprised to observe that every thing was done as it ought to be, but omitted to notice that the

hand-writing was not that of his new clerk. Presently a well-known voice saluted his ear, and on going in some alarm into an inner apartment, used as a sample-room, he saw Watt Lee bargaining just in his usual manner with a dealer about certain bags of coffee. So little affected did he seem to have been by his illness, that his employer could not perceive the slightest alteration in his manner or appearance; and when he came forward and asked, in his usual tone, some questions regarding the price that would be accepted for the article he was about to sell, it was some moments before the merchant could answer. Watt wondered louder than any body at his speedy recovery, but attributed his illness to having taken rather too hearty a drink at the leave-taking. He even hazarded a reproach to the Baillie for not putting him on board the ves-sel just in the state he was—but perceiving a cloud lowering in the eye of the magistrate, cut himself short, by remarking that he hoped it was all for the best.

The fiery West Indian became perfectly desperate at this second disappointment, and took desperate measures accordingly. The king at this juncture was sorely in want of hands for his navy; and although, even in the humblest and worst paid of the other sorts of employment, there were more applicants to be found than va-

cancies, his majesty was under the singular necessity of compelling his subjects to their own advantage, and had instituted in every considerable maritime town a body of logicians, commonly known by the appellation of a press-gang, to demonstrate, at the point of the cutlass, the superior advantage afforded by the honourable and national profession of the sea. Mr. Snelldrake was intimately acquainted with the officer commanding the tender, which was stationed at Greenelm, for the reception of proselytes to this doctrine, and found little difficulty in persuading him to remove an obnoxious rival from a scene where his influence was so dangerous. Whether the gallant lieutenant was in any sort influenced in the matter, by sundry dinners and drinkings bestowed on him by the West-Indian, we cannot say; but it is probable, whether or not, that he regarded the scheme as merely a fair enough stratagem, and a capital good joke to boot. Snelldrake took care to keep his former confederate, the Baillie, in ignorance of the new plot, which he was pretty certain would not meet with his concurrence; and that he might run no risk of his interference on behalf of the destined victim, deferred the execution of the project till the day before that on which the tender was to sailfrom the port with her live cargo.

On that evening, as Watt's ill luck would

have it, he left the counting-house early, and, before going home, took a twilight ramble along the shore, to muse, as is the wont of lovers, on the colour of their ladies' eyes, which was very passably imitated on the bright bosom of a beautiful and cloudless sky; to shoot flat pebbles along the surface of the water, and watch them leaping lightly on, like an aquatic bird, skimming and dipping alternately, which is the perfection of this sport, till they vanished slowly in the distance; to calculate the schemes of his tiring out the merchant's obduracy, and thwarting the schemes of the confederacy against him, and to curse the old negro-driver from the very depths of his bowels. He had not proceeded far from the town, when his attention was arrested by the appearance of the tender's boat, with her full complement of men, making directly for the place on which he stood. Not having the slightest suspicion that he was himself the object of their pursuit, he resolved to wait their landing, and enjoy whatever fun might be going forward. The boat speedily reached the shore, and three of the crew, armed with cutlasses, proceeded up the beach. They did not make their approach in a direct line, but, apparently with some more distant object in view, walked smartly away in another direction. Presently, however, he observed them alter their course, and make a circuit

behind; the men separating to such a distance from each other as to cut him off at all points. The truth now flashed fearfully on his mind, and for an instant he was struck motionless by surprise and indignation. "And me the Baillie's clerk!" was his first exclamation; "the audacious villains!" But he had little time for soliloquy; for the enemy, as they approached with rapid strides, narrowed their ranks, till, with the boat at one quarter of the compass, and an armed desperado at each of the others, Watt saw himself in an alarming predicament. Determined, however, not to submit without a struggle, he looked hastily round for some implement of defence, and luckily perceived among the stones a huge plant, more resembling a handspike in length and thickness than a christian cudgel, with which he thankfully armed himself. As it would not have been prudent to allow his antagonists to concentrate their forces, he resolved rather to begin the attack than wait for their arrival; brandishing therefore his formidable weapon in both hands, he rushed at the nearest of the gang and, being a powerful fellow, with a single blow brought him to the ground. In an instant however the other two were upon him, one at each side, and although for some time he managed to keep off their cutlasses by swinging the handspike round his body, retreating all the

while as speedily as the unevenness of the ground and the cumberousness of the weapon permitted, it was evident that he could not make sufficient way, nor continue such violent exercise long enough to save himself. It would have been improper to confine himself uniformly to a retrograde motion, and sometimes therefore he made a rush forward, which with a more delicate weapon would be termed a lunge, and on these occasions he succeeded in prostrating successively his three antagonists. But no sooner one was down than another was up—for sailors are ac-customed to hard knocks in the way of their vocation; even the first sufferer, who received the greatest injury from being less prepared for the catastrophe, preserved a horizontal position only a few seconds, when he raised himself on his hinder end; and feeling carefully whether any of the bones of the cranium were broken, spat in his rough hand, preparatory to replacing his cut-lass in its grasp, and stood up again to the contest. The rest of the boat's crew in the mean while looked on at their leisure, without offering any interference. They were probably ashamed to send a reinforcement, thinking three men must surely be a match for one; at the same time however the interest they felt in the result was evident, by their standing eagerly up in the boat, and vociferating sundry sea-faring calls and

curses, to suit the circumstances of the battle. Although as much desirous as author need be to place our hero's prowess in as brilliant a light as possible, we must candidly acknowledge that his stout arm began now to wax weak, and his valiant heart to despair, and in all probability he would not have been able to continue his flaillike exercise much longer, even had he not been caught by the leg and capsized by one of his fallen enemies, as he unwarily pressed forward He was now quickly carried to the too far. boat and deposited on one of the beams, his enemies paying the compliment to courage of posting a guard on each side. That courage, however, now appeared to desert him. horrors of his situation burst at once upon him; without a friend in the world capable of advocating his cause with any effect, except his employer, the merchant, who was probably himself a party in the infamous plot which had deprived him of liberty, he knew he had little chance of relief, and more especially as the vessel was to sail on the following morning from the only neighbourhood in which he was known at all. He looked back to the receding shore with a countenance in which despair was strongly painted, and then throwing himself down in the bottom of the boat, sent forth so dismal a howl, that the astonished sailors looked aghast at one another. They

soon forgot the bravery he had exhibited on shore, in the pusillanimity with which he seemed to bear his fate on their own element, and after cracking a few nautical jokes on his prostration of body and mind, paid no further attention to him.

The spot on which the contest we have described had taken place, formed part of a bay. the corner of which, nearest the town and by which the boat was to pass, run out a considerable distance into the sea. The tender lay little more than a cable's length from this point, on the town-ward side, but they had to pull out some distance to avoid a quantity of timber which formed a kind of loose raft, the logs being strung to one another by means of staples fixed in their ends through the links of an iron chain. Apparently feeling by the motion of the boat that they were going further out into the channel than he had supposed to be necessary, the prisoner raised himself on his knees from the recumbent posture he had hitherto kept, and looked for an instant over the gunwale. Presently a splash was heard in the water; and the sailors, turning their heads suddenly from some sea-ward object which had engrossed their attention, were just in time to see their charge disappearing under the waves. The cowardly despair into which he seemed to have been plunged had so

completely lulled any suspicion they might have entertained of his attempting to escape, that even now they paused for a moment, in the belief that he had thrown himself into the sea more with an intention to sink than to swim. But they were undeceived by observing him raise his head from the water, when he had arrived beyond the circle of their oars, and push steadily forward towards the raft. With a wild halloo the astonished sailors commenced the chase, and when their boat's head was turned to the point, a very few vigorous strokes of their oars made up for the moment they had lost in their surprise. The swimmer had just gained the raft, when the light gig, as she was technically termed, struck with such violence on its end, that a man who stood ready at the prow, seemed rather to be forcibly ejected by the shock, than to leap upon the logs of his own free-will. Watt however had the start, and sprang lightly along the loose timber, which, as is usual, had ample room to rock and wheel beneath his feet, and were rendered still more dangerous footing by the sea rising at this place in a strong jobble, and tossing them in all directions. His pursuer unfortunately was still more accustomed than he to this sort of passage, and evidently gained ground; there was besides an open space in the raft to encounter before reaching the shore, caused by the removal of

several logs, and Watt felt rather diffident as to the event of a leap. He turned round as if to parley; but the sailor would listen to no 'jaw;' in an instant he was on the very plank on which Watt stood, and his hand extended to grasp his prize by the throat, when the latter, by a trick he had early learnt when dabbling with his playmates among the timber-yards of Greenelm, dexterously wheeled the log round at the moment when his adversary's whole weight was rested on it, and sent him floundering among the timbers. Watt then went leisurely to the side of the raft, and committing himself once more to the water, was in a few minutes safe on shore.

May was sitting alone in the parlour, when her lover stalked into the room hatless and shoeless, like an apparition of the drowned; his face pale with cold and fatigue, and his sandy locks hanging over his brow, like a pound of tallowcandles.

"In His name, Watt Lee, what has come over you?" cried his terrified mistress; but Watt without answering sat down beside her, all dripping as he was, and putting back his hair with his blue fingers, that he might see and hear distinctly, turned himself on the chair so as to front May, and fixed his watery eyes on her face. "May," said he, at length, "do you remember that your father wanted to turn me out of the

business, after a long and faithful service, and that I endured daily the torments of the damned in keeping my tongue between my teeth, when he came on with his blethers just to try the fortitude of my patience—and all for love of you, May?"

"To be sure I do, Watt Lee," said May, "but what has that to do-"

"And do you remember," interrupted Watt, "that I was nearly shipped off to the West Indies, as innocent of all thoughts or desires thereto, as a bale of Osnaburghs; and that to escape, I was fain to lay eighteen hours on my back without turning, and to swallow clants of such stuff, as it makes my soul sick but to think of—and all for love of you, May?"

"To be sure I do, dear Watt; yet, you know, the doctor said you were all the better, body and spirit, for the screed of castor-oil you got from him, and of doctrine from the minister—but for goodness sake and mine, what has that to do—"

"Then know now," cried Watt, impatiently, "that my life and liberty have been attacked! single-handed I fought for three hours against sixteen murderers, set on me by your father and your new wooer—and when they found they could not kill me so easily, they bound me hand and foot, and carried me out into the roads, and put me on board a ship bound for Africa, and

from which I escaped by little short of a miracle, swimming all the way below the water till I gained the shore—and all for love of you, May!"

Almost screaming with surprise and horror, May heard this dreadful narrative, which it would have been impossible for her to believe but for the irrefragable evidence before her, in Watt's person, dripping with the very water through which he had swam, and bruised with the very blows he had suffered. Her eyes filled with tears, and regardless of the damage her dress might sustain by the contact, she threw herself into his arms.

"O what shall we do?" cried she, "that hateful old villain will murder you before my eyes—I almost wish you had gone to—"

"Hush, hush," interrupted Watt, "I'll tell you what we shall do—you shall run away with me!"

"A likely story, indeed!" said May, raising her head coquettishly from Watt's shoulder.

"I know the Baillie;" continued her lover, "when all is over, and cannot be helped, he will rather be glad, honest man, to have got over the fash he has between me and old Snelldrake—at any rate I cannot stay here to be turned out of doors, transported, poisoned, stabbed, and drowned—I am off to-night."

"To-night!"

"Aye, to-night," said Watt, in his most peremptory tone; and then lowering his voice and taking May by the hand, added softly, and looking fondly in her face, "Will you go with me, May?"

May still said, "A likely story!" but in a less decided tone.

"I have a plan," said Watt, not seeming to doubt of her consent, "by which we shall have the start a whole night, difficult as it is now-a-days to get sight orspeech of you. I will contrive to be locked into the warehouse to-night, where you can easily join me, by the door which communicates with the dwelling-house, and which is never locked. You shall then, for want of a better mode of egress, just make the venture you did when you were a lassie,—descend into the street, from the upper window, by the crane—only I will take care to fasten a chair to the clicks, and tie you well on. As for myself, I can slide down the rope after you, as I have often done."

We are not acquainted with the arguments used by Watt to persuade his mistress to this dangerous step, but to all appearance they were successful; for wet and cold as he was he appeared in excellent spirits on leaving the house, and meeting old Snelldrake as May went with him to

the door, the latter had so far conquered the fear, inspired by this disagreeable person, that, while passing him, with a scornful look and impressive emphasis, she sang a stanza of a popular Scotch ballad,

"The carle he cam ower the craft
Wi' his beard new shaven;
He glower'd at me as he'd been daft—
Hoot, awa, I winna hae him."

The despised lover threw after the youthful pair a glance expressive of any thing but affection, and hastened to shut himself into a room where he might be out of hearing of the song, whose burthen, accompanied by the malicious laugh of Watt Lee, rung shrilly in his ears,

" Hoot, awa, I winna hae him."

This seemed to Watt the longest evening he had spent, and to May the shortest; the former longed impatiently for the hour that was to make May his own, while the latter dreaded, even more than she desired, its coming, and started in affright, as every successive hour, told by the house-clock, smote upon her ear. The time at last arrived; it was the dead of night, and May, cold and trembling, rose from her bed, on which she had lain down in her clothes, and crept up to the warehouse more like a culprit to execution,

than a young maid to her lover. She found Watt standing by the window, endeavouring, by the faint light of the moon, to discover the hour, indicated by a clock with which a shed on the quay was furnished.

"Softly, for heaven's sake, dear May!" cried the lover, when he was aware of her footsteps,—"This old negro-driver must be the very devil incarnate; only look—"and he led her to the window, from which he showed her the West-Indian in a situation which we must now proceed to explain.

This worthy had observed from the window of the inn, in which he had taken up his abode, our dripping hero returning in safety from the perilous adventure he had so gallantly achieved; and from his making his way directly to his employer's house, suspected that it might be for the purpose of exposing the scheme and its author, if not of making a complaint to the Baillie in his magisterial capacity. To learn what was going forward, and that he might be ready to defend himself in person, Snelldrake proceeded as swiftly as his spindle limbs could convey him to Mr. Menzies' house, which he entered only a few minutes after Watt. Finding that the Baillie was not at home, he bethought himself of reconnoitring the motions of the young lovers, and accordingly, stealing along the passage, made

no ceremony of applying his eye and his ear alternately to the key-hole of the parlour door. Another man in a similar situation would, probably. have been quite outrageous at hearing an elopement planned by his mistress; but nothing had given the wily old slave-master so much pleasure from the commencement of the love-suit. He now felt confident of success; he would catch them in the very act of flight, have Watt turned off, once and for ever, by the enraged magistrate, and with a clear field and no antagonist, her father's commands in his favour, and his own insinuating address, May would surely be his own in a fortnight. Such were the pleasing anticipations that occupied his thoughts; when, after carefully wrapping himself up in a great-coat, and fastening a large silk handkerchief, drawn over the crown of his hat, under his chin, to keep out the cold, he wended his way at the hour of cause from the inn. It was a beautiful moonlight night; scarcely a breath of wind was felt, and not a motion could be perceived around; the heavy white sails of the vessels in the harbour hung lifelessly from the masts, and the smooth water reflected their various forms with an unbroken distinctness of outline, which gave a kind of magical stillness to the scene. In the visible sky alone, where some wandering airs appeared to be sweeping along their blue path, far removed from the grosser influence of the earth, thin pale clouds were seen, passing occasionally over the brow of heaven, but with a slow and gliding pace, which relieved the deadness, without disturbing the tranquillity of the hour.

But beautiful as was the night, there was something abhorrent to the mind of Snelldrake in its stillness. He half repented that he had undertaken the task of watching the lovers; but the thirst of vengeance, united with a passion which, in bosoms like his, does not deserve the name of love, repressed the desire he felt to knock at the door, and make his friend aware at once of young Lee's being in the house. His plan was to wait till he saw clearly the objects of his love and hatred at the warehouse window, and then, when no doubt could exist of their mutual intentions, to alarm the inmates. To prevent the possibility of their descending before he reached the spot, he had taken care to have the rope of the crane (which when not in immediate use was wound round the windless in such a manner that the clicks were suspended immediately under the beam, so as to be within reach from the window) lowered down to the street, and fastened to the iron rails of the doorway. The time wore slowly away, and still the lovers did not make their appearance; the spy was getting tired and drowsy, and, to make his situation more unpleasant, there was not even a stone or a post to rest on. Scarcely able to stand longer, he went down to the shed on the quay, to endeavour to roll a cask towards the house for a seat, but the noise it made he was afraid would alarm the runaways, and probably induce them to give up their intention for the night. Neither would it do for him to be so far distant from the proposed scene of action; he was alarmed lest his growing drowsiness might increase into actual sleep, and that the Cunninge Clerk, by he knew not what stratagem, might get possession of the rope. In this predicament, afraid to rest on the damp ground for fear of rheumatism, and determined not to quit the rope by which the hopes of his love and hate seemed to be suspended, he was fain to carry a stave from the shed, and fastening it by the middle to the iron click of the important rope, to rest his weary limbs by sitting on it astride, while he embraced the hempen comforter with his arms. It was in this singular and most unaccommodating posture, that he was pointed out by Watt Lee to his trembling mistress. We do not presume to follow the thoughts of the worthy gentleman while he sat taking his rest in so unusual a fashion; but it is probable, that they may have been somewhat disturbed by certain associations connected with the article he hugged so closely, in its union with the projecting beam above, otherwise the swinging

motion he was obliged to undergo, from the rope having already reached its utmost length, and his short legs being, in consequence, almost entirely raised from the ground, would assuredly have set him fast asleep. As it was, he could not properly be said to be either asleep or awake, his thinking faculties remaining in that cloudy state, which is the twilight of the mind, sometimes experienced in the heavy doze we endure rather than enjoy, after too much sleep, or when disease or care prevents the approach of sound sleep at all. Great was the consternation of the intended fugitives, at seeing so unexpected a difficulty in their way. Watt's first thought was to drop a bag of his own cotton on the officious West Indian; but fearing that this might do rather more than stun him, he abandoned the idea. His next scheme was to slide rapidly down on his shoulders and gag him; but a single cry, he remembered, would bring up the custom-house patrol from the quay. The hour in the mean time was stealing away, and May stood weeping and wringing her hands beside him. At length his determination was taken. Holding strongly by the rope where it was fastened to the windlass, that no diminution of security might be felt below, he caused May to undo the fastening, and remove the end altogether from the roller, thus making the block, or

large pulley at the end of the projecting beam, the only supporter. Then fastening a thick piece of wood to the liberated end of the rope, on the plan adopted by his enemy below, he fixed himself resolutely astride on this apparently precarious seat, which would have been really dangerous to one less accustomed to such feats, and by dint of persuasion, assisted in no small degree by main strength, seated May on his knees, and commenced their descent. As one end of the rope descended, the other of consequence rose, but the whole was managed so quietly, and Watt continued to hold so firmly by the end to which Snelldrake was appended, allowing it softly and gradually to slide through his hands, that the West Indian was far up in the air before, in the confused state of his intellects, he became conscious that he had taken his departure from the earth. When he at length, however, perceived his actual situation, rising into the air heaven only knew how or wherefore, the horror of the miserable man was indescribable, and the hollow groan which at first issued as if from the pit of his stomach, and then rising gradually, keeping pace with his assent, into a desperate shout, expressive, at the same instant, of astonishment, dismay, expostulation, and furious resentment, was so loud and woeful, that all idea of the ludicrous, which such an exhibition was otherwise well calculated to inspire. must have been forgotten during its continuance. Even Watt Lee himself was in some sort astounded by the dismal noise, and a "Lord preserve us!" was devoutly mingled with the execration in the name of an opposite power. which his fear of its raising the house prematurely against him elicited. There was no time to lose, however, and he made the rope spin through his fingers so rapidly, that in an instant the two parties met mid-way, and the eyes of the upward bound, who still held on like grim death, glared on those of his enemy with a look of rage, so absurdly mingled with deprecation, that Watt, alarmed as he was, could hardly forbear from laughing outright. After losing hold of the ascending rope, their descent, from the great superiority of weight on their side, was necessarily rapid; but Watt broke the shock with his feet, and in a moment they stood in safety on the ground. The first step of the adventurous cavalier was to fasten the end of the rope to the iron railing, so that Snelldrake might remain suspended in the air till relieved by his friends, whom his terrible cries would no doubt speedily bring to his assistance; and which would serve also the purpose of engaging their attention, till the lovers should get clear off, for it was not reasonable to suppose that Snelldrake would enter into the cause of his

elevation before he had safely descended. They then left him to his fate; and well it was for them that no further delay occurred, for they were no sooner out of sight, than not only the Baillie and his family, but every soul in the street, who was not deaf or bedridden. crowded to the spot. The first emotions excited in the spectators, were horror and commiseration, for it seemed to them that some unfortunate man was really suspended in the usual fashion, videlicet, by the neck, on a gallows as high as that of Haman; but speedily the truth appeared. When in a few minutes a lighted candle was held from the warehouse, exhibiting, with its yellow light struggling amidst the faint moon-beams, the rueful countenance of the West Indian peeping through the handkerchief which covered his hat, and was tied under his chin in the style of an old washerwoman, a shout rose from the crowd that might have awakened the inhabitants at the most distant part of the town. As for the Baillie, he felt by far too much ashamed of the figure cut by his son-in-law elect, to enjoy the laugh at his expense; and in fact it seemed to him, as he stood there in so near a relation to the aerial voyager, that a part of the ridicule must attach to himself and family; an idea which made the worthy magistrate, who dreaded the public gaze even on honourable occasions, sweat

with very vexation Snelldrake, by the assistance of the standers by, was now on his descent, but this, perhaps on purpose, was managed so clumsily, that the swinging of the rope transferred the sickness of his heart to his stomach, which instantaneously discharged its vengeance on the heads of the jesters. The Baillie could stand no more; he returned into his house, packed every soul to their beds, and locking the door, betook himself in disgust and mortification to his own dormitory.

In two hours after this adventure, Mr. Snell-drake took French leave of Greenelm and its inhabitants. The next day the fugitives returned man and wife, and were received by the Baillie, as kindly as if every thing had taken place with his own concurrence.

## THE RETURN.

THE unusual sound of a post-chaise, as its tortured wheels rumbled and floundered over the disjointed pavement of Elmsmere, drew one day the inhabitants of that remote village to their doors and windows. The elderly part of the spectators contented themselves with gazing after it, till some projecting point in the winding and irregular street concealed it from their view; while the younger fry, that forms so large a proportion of village population, pursued it with shrill cries, and gathering about the door where it stopped, watched with silent wonder the descent of the single traveller it contained. There was not much in his appearance to excite or to gratify their juvenile curiosity, and after making way for him with the respect due to a man who travels in a post-chaise, they transferred their attention entirely to the vehicle itself. Some of the seniors who had sanntered to the spot to learn what news was stirring in the world, were still less taken with the stranger's figure, and turned away muttering somewhat contemptuously,--" a return chaise;" but the landlord of the little inn, who had formerly been a corporal of militia, and consequently enjoyed proportionable opportunities of becoming acquainted with genteel life, touched his hat respectfully to the traveller, and opened the door of the parlour with his own hands. The stranger was apparently a man bordering on thirty. He wore a white straw hat, blue jacket and trowsers, and boots. At a little distance he might have been taken for a sailor; but a close observer, in spite of his dress and sunburnt, weather-beaten countenance, would have easily detected, in his erect figure and firm step, the denizen of a less unstable element. The finemess of the materials, too, of which these common habiliments were made, had not escaped the sharp eye of mine host; and the golden popinion brought by that air of gentility he prided himself on being able to discover at a glance, probably received no small weight from the rich heavy-looking silk handkerchief which was tied loosely about the traveller's neck, and the massive gold chain suspended from his watch-pocket. The landlord lingered in the room manœuvring among common remarks touching the weather and the crops, to edge in some question which might satisfy his curiosity as to the whence and whither of his guest; but the latter, with equal skill, parried every thrust, retorting in his turn, with inquiries that seemed naturally to grow out of his opponent's. At last, fairly vanquished in the struggle, the host gave himself up to the will of the conqueror, and speedily poured forth the whole history of the country-side, as far as it was visible from the parlour window; the traveller only sliding in a word occasionally to direct his course.

"And the large house, rising among the trees on the brow of the hill—it seems new—some stranger perhaps?" said the traveller, inquiringly.

"Aye, aye, strange enough," replied the land-lord; "on that very spot stood the cottage in which the squire was born,—no squire in those days—but the son of a plain honest man, who died as he lived, poor and friendless. But the son was wiser, in the wisdom of the times, and a sharp, proud, obstinate boy he was from his very birth. When he had put his father below ground, away he set, without a good-bye, or a God bless you, to carry abroad with him into the world,—away he set, alone and pennyless, nobody knew where. New tenants came to the

à

: b

aı

b

砂砂山

cottage, old fellows died, and young ones grew up; and at length the lost lad returned a man in the prime of life. Who then but he? The old house was pulled down, and yon palace rose proudly on its ruins, the gentry flocked to see him, and balls, and dinners, were the order of the day; he is now the very prince of the land, and in not many days I reckon, will carry up to the grand house, as its mistress and his queen, the best and the loveliest lady within a hundred miles."

The traveller started, and looked earnestly at the landlord, as if to inquire without words what further he had to tell.

" Married," said he at last, " to-to-"

"To Miss Stanley," said the landlord,—"heaven bless her, for she is the pride of them all. Her father lives in you old-looking mansion you may see, further on than the hall, as they call the grand building, and half concealed by its new-fashioned offices. Her father was once what Mr. Clifford is now, the head of the county; but what with speculation in mines, and losses by bankrupts with whom he had placed his money, he has been sinking and sinking for many years past, and now it is thought has much to do to keep up the appearance of his thin and threadbare gentility."

- "Then he, no doubt, is anxious about this match—or does she—does Miss Stanley—"

  "Ah, poor young lady," interrupted the land-
- "Ah, poor young lady," interrupted the landlord, "no doubt she feels the change in her situation, as do the old and the poor of the neighbourhood the lack of her little pensions; and I'll warrant me she casts many a keen look through her maiden coyness, at the fine house with its rich woods and sweeping avenues. But it is hard to say; report goes that her heart does not quite lye to it, and some talk of another love that is in the way, although the lad is dead and gone."
- "Aye," said the traveller, with a sudden glow, and giving a long sigh, like one who had held his breath for some time, "and so there is a dead lover in the way?"
- "Yes," said the landlord; "young Mortimer, the son of our curate, and a fine spark in his day, as people tell, although I knew but little of him myself. Some said he was to have married Miss Stanley; but even half a dozen years ago the curate's son was no match for the squire's daughter, for the decay of the Stanleys was then only beginning; and so after many a promise, I have heard say, and plenty of tears and kisses, the young people separated, once and for ever, as it turned out,—for the lad went into the world

to push his fortune, and died in foreign parts." The traveller pushed his chair from the table, and suddenly catching up his hat drew it over his brow; then musing for a moment, threw down some money, and telling his entertainer that he would probably return and sleep there that night, went hastily out.

"A queer chap enough," said the landlord when alone, ringing the coin on the table, "a gentleman every inch of him, I'll be bound, but something ajee, I misdoubt me, in the upperworks—ajee, said I;—stark mad, by—! look if he has not squeezed the pint measure to a mummy-there are the marks of his four fingers and thumb, if I were to be hanged for it! Lord, how he spanks across the fields, bound direct for the hall; better to have taken the carriage road, though, an' it be the longest-he will be thrown out presently, for there are three gaps in the hedge beside the right one. Now he turns the corner of the old elm; -- ha -- 'ware that, it's the wrong gap,—left shoulders forward!" continued the old militiaman, "and d——e if he does not obey the command!—t'other gap—won't do, forward still; a third—let's see now, you may go further and fare worse; that is to say, if you go farther, you will get to pot sooner than to the hall; he hesitates, looks forward, looks back,

—in, ye devil,—and in he goes, like a shot, d—e, whiz!"

The traveller had really taken the right road towards the scene of the landlord's histories, but, although guided more by memory than chance, it was with a good deal of difficulty he hit the point.

Half a dozen years had wrought many changes even in the physical aspect of the country, and the fields that his foot had been so familiar with when a boy, were now strange land. At length he gained the road, at the place from which the great avenue leading to the hall diverged; and here every thing was new. In place of the hawthorn hedge, ornamented with honeysuckle and wild roses, which in former times had defended the road-side, there rose a gigantic wall which concealed even the trees beyond; while the two large willows he remembered so well to have stood like centinels, at the entrance to the path which led to the cottage on the hill-side, had been torn up, to make room for a magnificent arch of solid granite. Casting many a jealous and indignant glance at these innovations of upstart wealth, he passed on, and in a few minutes Mr. Stanley's house, with its gray time-worn front, half-raised outhouses, and neglected pleasure-grounds, stood before him. Here he slack-

ened his pace; the feelings which seemed to have given wings to his speed, now suddenly deserted him, and his burning cheek became cold and pale. And it is for this, thought he, I have returned! For her I became an exile and a wanderer; deserted home, parents, every thingstrove, conquered, suffered. I made her the guiding star of my life; every thought was centred in her; my heart was shut even to the voice of friendship, and my eyes closed to the smiles of beauty; I hunted after riches, and obtained them with blood and sweat-but the gold was for her, the fine gold was to deck the bride of my choice. Six years, six long, long years have passed over me—their pressure is on my head, their mark is on my brow! I have come back to seek my reward, to claim her as my own in the face of God and man-and now-O woman, woman! Mortimer struck his hand violently upon his eyes, and, overcome for a moment by the host of tender and painful recollections which crowded into his mind, suffered the tears that had not visited his cheek since infancy to gush unchecked between his fingers. length, dashing hastily away the rebellious drops, he again walked quickly on. I will at least see her once more, said he, I will start up before her like a spirit from the grave, and then pass silently

on, along a path which will now be so lonely and desolate!

At this moment he was overtaken on the road by a person whom he had observed some time before, but afterwards lost sight of. He wore a hunting dress, and carried a gun in his hand. In no mood for company, and, besides, fearing that his emotions might have been observed, Mortimer turned away his head and slackened his pace, to allow him to pass on; but the stranger suited his steps to the company he had fallen in with, and in a few minutes, with the licence assumed in unfrequented parts of the country, endeavoured to draw his unwilling companion into conversation. Mortimer, scarcely turning his head, assented by ungracious monosyllables to the usual propositions, with which an Englishman commences an attack of this kind, and which were made in the indifferent common-place tone, which does not seem to demand any thing more than a bare assent; but when at length his eyes met those of the stranger, their fierce and penetrating glance, contrasted by the calmness of his voice, almost startled him.

The intruder seemed aware of the impression he had made, for instantaneously assuming a look of good-humoured frankness, he said, "Par-

don me, sir, but strangers of your figure are scarce in this out-of-the-way region, and therefore objects of no small interest, both to the natives themselves, and to such birds of passage as myself, who are constrained to nest here for a season in their journeying. Here have I, for fault of better company, been talking to Phœbe, (down, Phœbe!) this life-long day, and although as good a pointer as ever broke cover, she is but an indifferent bitch neither at conversation-so I thought when I saw you first at a distance, it would be a kind of treat, even to exchange good days with a christian man. But you distanced me famously, and I am no bad walker neither -but you have perhaps far to go-no moonlight—sun sets at six—hey?"

"I have not far to go," said Mortimer, "but"—here a suspicion flashed across his mind, which caused him to turn on his talkative companion a glance of as much scrutiny as he had himself sustained—could it be Clifford he now saw before him—his successful rival? The stranger was about the age of this fortunate upstart, and his figure and appearance just what he had fancied, from the description of the landlord; in his eyes he read the violent and haughty spirit which had distinguished even the boyhood of Clifford; and his soft, pliant, and beautiful lips bespoke the art by which the possessor must have contrived

to temper force with gentleness in his way to fortune, and the winning sweetness with which the happy lover had beguiled the heart of Miss Stanley.

While these thoughts passed rapidly across his mind, Mortimer's eyes wandered for a moment from their object to the hall, whose proud roof was conspicuous above the trees, when the stranger, without appearing to notice any peculiarity in his manner, remarked in a way that at once removed his suspicions: "Fine house, eh? Perhaps you don't know Mr. Clifford, since you are a stranger in this part of the earth; he is one of the most fortunate fellows breathing, a fine estate, large fortune, no relations to plague him, and the prettiest girl in the country—but I see I bore you—What's Hecuba to you? never mind, we'll talk of the crops."

"Not at all, not at all," said Mortimer, eagerly, and yet speaking with difficulty, "I am much amused, go on."

"What, have not I said enough? estate, fortune, freedom—what pretty girl could resist such a trio? not to talk either of a passable-enough person for a man fellow, an eye that does not always burn with the fiercer passions, as some idiots pretend, a heart that can love as well as hate, a hand that can defend as well as tear. Zounds!" continued the stranger, whose manner had altered from the careless indifference of his usual address, "talking of love, puts even me into the heroics—in a word, sir, my friend Clifford is irresistible, because he is the most impudent dog in the world."

"And the lady," said Mortimer, with ill-assumed indifference.

"O, she is a paragon, of course; of the best family, too, in the country, although the poorest, and that will be another triumph for the low-born Clifford."

"Low-born!" said Mortimer, "and is there no struggle on the part of the lady, or her friends—no debate between poverty and pride?"

"Pride!" cried the stranger, with an emphasis of the bitterest scorn, "he is rich, I tell you, he can buy and sell their pride a thousand times over. Pride! Look there, do you see that stately building, rising from the bosom of yonder wood; follow the line of wall, that shuts in the domain from vulgar gaze, as far as the eye can reach, mark the orchards, the gardens, the parks extending along the side of the hills; fancy the master of the whole, driving up yonder sweeping avenue, the first time its magnificent portals unclosed for his reception—fancy the crowding of the nobles and gentry of the neighbourhood to embrace and congratulate him—the humility of the proud, the envy of the little, the condescen-

sion of the great, the prostration of the mean! Now, mark !" continued the stranger, " destroy, if your imagination have power, the mighty fabric that art has raised at the command of wealth before your eyes; convert these lawns and gardens into a barren wilderness; place in the midst a cottage, as destitute of comfort as of ornament, and fancy the late lord of the ascendant, its only master and tenant, a wretched, ragged bov .--- It is Clifford-spurned by the gilded reptiles who now fawn at his feet, insulted, buffeted, trampled on, and only daring in return to look the curses he would fain have hurled in their teeth. I tell you, on the very day when that wretched boy first turned his back on his native home, he looked forward to the present. He toiled, cringed. struggled, suffered, crouched his way through the world, for twenty years; and returnedso !"

The vehemence of the stranger, and a kind of wild eloquence his manner possessed, which brought subjects and situations before the eye with all the force of reality, would have effectually arrested the attention of Mortimer, even had the subject been one of less personal interest. As it was, he listened to this friend of his rival with an eagerness that must have been depicted in his countenance. From all he knew of Emma Stanley, and long and well had he known her,

he was convinced that one such as Clifford appeared to be, could not have been her choice; and yet the boldness and strength of this man's character, were such as might conquer difficulties which, to an ordinary mind, would appear insurmountable. It is impossible, he thought; I will not believe that her noble spirit can be influenced by the riches his grosser mind conceives to be so all-powerful. She has believed me to be dead for many months—almost a year; her father is poor and infirm, this Clifford bold, artful, and reckless; who knows what persuasions may not have been used—and yet, for her, I would have mourned longer.

His meditations would have probably run on farther, but for his companion's bidding him good day, as they approached a lane which led up from the road; "Adieu," said he, "if you remain long in this part of the country, you will hear more of Clifford; they will tell you he is cold, and selfish, and proud, but remember, I have given you a key to his heart." And so saying, he walked quickly away, and in a few minutes was out of sight.

Mortimer was now only a very short distance from Mr. Stanley's house, and paused in some uncertainty as to the step it would be proper for him to take. His first intention had been to present himself to his mistress just as he then was, in the dress he had worn on ship-board. With regard to the constancy of the lady, he had never doubted it; and loving, as he did himself, with a devotedness of heart, which neither time nor absence had been able in the least degree to abate; his supposed death, he conceived, could only have had the effect of fixing more firmly his image on her heart. Her love, he thought, would merely be rendered more sacred by grief, without otherwise changing its character; and his imagination delighted to follow her to the haunts of their early happiness, where she wandered lonely and slow, finding a substitute in the retrospective dreams of memory for the illusions of hope, and fancying 'naught so sweet as melancholy.' Sometimes she was the lady in marble, who leans over an urn, fixing her lack-lustre eyes on the cold depository of her hopes and heart, and it seemed to him a fine thing to be buried in such a tomb.

The information, however, he had elicited from the landlord, and which was now confirmed by one who appeared to be the intimate friend of Clifford, had suddenly deranged the whole system of his imaginations; he begun to fear that grief is one thing and love another; death, that cancels so many bonds, was no excuse to him, and her having ceased to feel for a dead lover the same sort of passion which he had inspired while

living, was nothing less than breach of faith, rank infidelity. From the extreme of confidence, he sunk at once into the lowest abyss of despondency. Her father's unhappy circumstances, the unprotected situation in which his death might place her, a thousand considerations of prudence, which in similar circumstances are supposed to influence the decision of a woman, occurred to him with a startling distinctness. Then the impossibility (as she believed) of being united to him, the vows that were buried with him in his watery grave, no more to rise in judgment against her; and lastly, the advantages possessed by Clifford, "personal and real," a fine figure, as his friend seemed to intimate, and a fine estate, all came in so imposing an array against his hopes, that he had well nigh determined to return as he had come, without even seeking the momentary interview he had at first contemplated.

Still unresolved how to act, he passed the avenue, and hardly conscious of what he was about, struck into a narrow and circuitous path he well remembered as the one which had so often led him to the garden-door, where a passing look, a pressure of the hand, or a hurried whisper, had occasionally been the reward of half a day's watching, after the ports had been shut against him by the squire, and his addresses declared contraband. At the end of this path,

and skirting the garden-wall, there was a little wilderness of trees, arranged so as to have the appearance of a natural wood; here the lovers, when peculiarly fortunate, had taken their stolen walks, effectually concealed by the foliage. Every thing appeared to be the same as when he had last visited the spot; the very house, for the shades of evening had begun to fall, reminded him of the parting interview. It was here, for the last time, he had pressed his weeping Emma to his bosom; how many tender, painful, mad-dening thoughts rushed into his mind! Her voice was among the trees, her footsteps on the path, her form glanced through the branches at every turn! At length his walk became more hurried, his cheeks glowed, and his eyes glistened; the magic of fancy seemed to confer the most palpable reality on the dreams of love, and he cried out with a loud voice,—" Emma! Emma!" Suddenly the sounds he had heard, or imagined, ceased, a breathless stillness pervaded the wood, and he stopped short in his progress as if arrested by some invisible hand. There was a form before him; it seemed to have emerged from the bosom of the trees without waving a leaf, and approached with the light and gliding pace which belongs, in our imagination, to the creatures of a purer world. It was Emma herself. Forgetting for a moment the

doubts and fears that had distracted him, his first impulse was to rush forward, and clasp to his heart the form, whether real or visionary, that had risen before him at the magic call of love; but he controlled his feelings, and shrunk further into the shade of a large tree near which he stood. As she approached closer he conjectured, from her faultering but hurried steps, and the wild glance she threw around, that she had heard his voice; by degrees, however, her manner became more composed, she slackened her pace. and at length heaving a deep sigh, stood still nearly opposite her lover. Presently some brisker steps were heard at the end of the path, and a young lady, whom Mortimer remembered as a companion and confidential friend of Emma's, came bounding along.

"What a hurry you were in," said she, "I declare I fancied I heard some voice calling your name as you ran of; but it is too late for Clifford, and besides, you never suffer him to come her."

"For the sake of Heaven, mention that name no more!" said Emma, "a voice did call me,—and not with the sound which still rings in my ear when I am alone, or startles me in my sleep fill I raise my head on my pillow, and ask—so madly, so foolishly—if he has come home at last!—but with the distinct and articulate tone

which leaves no room for question.—It was his voice!"

- "What folly is this," replied her friend, " I shall never suffer you to come to this melancholy spot again. I was in hopes that you had at length listened to the voice of prudence and of religion, which alike condemn such continued grief."
- "It is not grief," said Emma, " at least not now; and it is not love such as I once felt, for the dead are too awful to be loved,—but if they would just let me alone, I should be so happy! I esteem Clifford, I almost love him for his kindness to my father, I would fain be a sister to him if he would let me; but I cannot love him as a wife; of this he is himself aware: and if I ever thought meanly of one, whose strong character is made to command either respect or fear, it was when he accepted of the reluctant hand I yielded to his solicitations, after telling him that my heart was in the deep sea."
- "Clifford has too much sense," said the confidant, "too much knowledge of the world, and of the human heart, to like you a bit the less as a wife for all that. He knows that the feelings you indulge for the dead cannot interfere with those inspired by the living; and that although the former may at this instant be the more powerful, yet every succeeding moment placed

between you and the catastrophe you deplore; will weaken the effect it produced. Believe me, my dear, you want only a little company, and a little hurry, to awaken your spirit again to life and enjoyment; and when you are transplanted from these gloomy shades into the light and splendour of Clifford Hall, the fantastic melancholy which now sits like the night-mare on your imagination, will vanish for ever. Nay,-what, have I hurt you? Silly girl! yet, dear Emma, I will be good, then, and never talk so again. We shall live and die, if you will, in our 'garden of faded flowers,' so 'fit for sorrow, for age, and -us.' Away all filial piety, all kindred ties, all human gratitude, every thought, and feeling, and duty which links us to the world,-there shall we sit down, and like a pair of pious hermitesses, pursue all day long, 'from night to morn, from morn to dewy eve,' our own sickly reveries, for the glory of God, and the good of our souls!-But what shall we say to Clifford," continued the lively girl, " when at the end of the month of probation he comes to claim the performance of your promise?

Mortimer did not hear the reply to this question, if any were made; for while thus rattling away with what appeared to him to be the most insufferable nonsense, the talkative confidant had slowly led off her victim, encircling her neck

with her arm, now pausing, and now going on, and looking up from time to time in her face, with all the pretty and playful expression of girlish fondness. His feelings during this conversation may be easier imagined than expressed. Emma still loved him! In spite of the wealth and power of Clifford, the entreaties of her aged and indigent father, and the incessant attacks of her friend, she had remained constant even to the dead; she had declared, even to Clifford himself, that " her heart was in the deep sea." This expression he repeated over and over to himself when they were out of sight, endeavouring to catch her tone, her manner, her air, her attitude, as she delivered it. More than once he was on the point of springing from his concealment and throwing himself at her feet in an ecstasy of gratitude and love, but the presence and words of the hateful confident seemed to chill and repulse him. At other times, a kind of delirium took possession of his senses; the transition from despair to joyful certainty was so sudden, he began almost to doubt the reality of what he saw and heard; every thing around him seemed shadowy and indistinct; and the pale and melancholy countenance of Emma, appearing of a préternatural whiteness by the contrast with her' dress of deep mourning, looked like one of those" visionary faces which flit before us in our sleep,

bending their meaning eyes on ours, that are fascinated by their gaze. At length they were out of sight. He had stolen behind them as closely as he durst, and when they left the wood, advanced as far as it was possible without discovery from the trees; when they had disappeared, the light laugh of the friend still fell faintly on his ear, then the shutting of a door, and the total silence which ensued, convinced him that they had entered the house; and he turned back into the darkening walk to congratulate himself at leisure on his happiness, and pursue his reflections. He at first determined that the following day should end at once the sorrow of Emma, and the presumptuous hopes of Clifford; I will start up before her, thought he, like a messenger from another world, to bid her again be happy, even in this plain dress, without attendance and without equipage, I shall not shrink from comparison with my rival; I will stand before her the same poor and friendless Mortimer she once knew, and the generous love which will prompt her to choose poverty with me, in preference to splendour with another, if it cannot be rewarded, will, at least, not be disgraced, by the wealth I shall afterwards pour into her lap, and at her feet. This idea, as it was flattering to the natural vanity of a man and a lover, was at first indulged with avidity; but

it was soon after met by thoughts of a different nature. He began to turn a glance of apprehension on the riches and grandeur of Clifford; would a poor man, he thought, have succeeded in attaining even the cold and reluctant assent she had granted to the importunities of her friends, and the exigences of their situation? Could it be possible that even his generous and high-minded Emma was secretly influenced by the magic of wealth? These questions startled him, and caused him to examine more minutely the words that had fallen from her, every one of which, with its peculiar tone and emphasis, were distinctly ampressed on his memory. It is not love, she had said, such as she once felt; What is it then? Are there two sorts of love? Is it possible, as her friend asserted, that love for the dead may exist at the same instant with love for the living? These were puzzling speculations; one does not very well understand being loved merely as a dead man; it tells awkwardly. Then she had at length yielded. In a month, while her heart, or her love, or whatever she chose to name it, should be with him in his imaginary grave, her person should be in the arms of Clifford;—the thought was madness! Again, it was not grief, she said, that affected her, any more than love! Did not this mean that they had both changed their characters, and that as the latter was a mere

abstract feeling which might permit her to exercise all the duties, and enjoy all the pleasures, of a wife, so the former had dwindled into a romantic melancholy, held together by associations of sunset, and trees, and places, and little stronger in its hold on the mind, than the vague regret with which we look back in the pauses of the world to the lost scenes of unwithered youth. By degrees he became impatient and dissatisfied, and at length, by dint of hard mental labour and no small ingenuity, so far distorted her words. her manner, and appearance, that he doubted whether, after all, his return would be acceptable to any party. At any rate, he abandoned the idea of appearing before his mistress in the mean habiliments he then wore; he determined to return to the place where his baggage and part of his acquired riches had been left, and to come home a second Clifford, to the valley in which he was born, and fairly to enter the lists with him in profusion, grandeur, every thing.

This plan, ridiculous as it was under these circumstances, was not wholly the whim of a lover dictated by love-like anxiety, desirous by all possible appliances and means, to ensure a favourable reception; he was partly influenced by a growing jealousy and spirit of rivalry, inspired by this unknown Clifford, and partly by a love of effect. He had a month before him, as it

15

seemed, but his plan would occupy only three or four days. At the end of that short time, he would roll up the old avenue in a splendid equipage, spring into the presence of his astonished Emma, who would hide her terror, and her joy, and her blushes, in his bosom, tell her that he had gained the wealth for which, on her account, he had forsaken his home and his country, and had returned to lay it at her feet.

It was almost dark before he had come to this conclusion, and he hastened out of the walk. determining to set off that very night. As he emerged from the trees, a slight rustling in the branches attracted his attention, and he fancied he could perceive, some moments after, a dark form gliding out of the wood. To this, however, in the excited state of his mind, he paid little attention, and taking the short route across the fields by which he had come, he soon gained the village inn. In less than half an hour he was again seated in the post-chaise; the landlord's best bow was made, and the little villagers had just raised their faces to give the shrill shout which was to accompany the first rattle of the earriage-wheels as it drove off, when Mortimer's eye accidentally rested on one of the spectators, who was wrapped in a dark cloak, and stood in a position where he could see without being distinetly seen. By one of those sudden and unaccountable tricks of the imagination, his thoughts were on the instant carried to the figure he had observed when quitting the wood, and although the appearance had not then made the slightest impression on him, nor had there been either time or light enough for him to have discovered more than the shadowy outlines of a human form, he yet felt convinced that it was the same. The next moment the carriage drove off, and as it turned the abrupt angle formed by the inn, the light of one of its lamps fell, with a sudden and momentary glare, on the face of the bystander, and discovered the fierce but handsome features of the stranger, who had accosted him on the road. This little circumstance left a disagreeable impression on his mind, which he could not account for, and the first half hour of his journey was spent in that uncomfortable state which attends a consciousness of acting in a foolish or imprudent manner. More than once he had a mind to turn back, and to sacrifice the boyish love of effect, or whatever it might be, which prompted him to defer his own happiness, and that of his Emma, even for a few days; but it is only in good we are irresolute and unsteady, in what is otherwise we are all strength and firmness; he therefore struggled with the magnanimity of a martyr against the suggestions of common-sense, and at length succeeded in persuading himself, that the line of conduct he had adopted was 'wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.'

In somewhat less than two days after his arrival at ———, the necessary arrangements were completed. The whole of the first day was passed in such a hurry of preparation, that he had scarcely a moment to think; but the next morning when his own part was finished, and he had nothing to do but wait the execution of his orders, a feverish anxiety took possession of his mind. Often he was on the point of ordering. his horse and setting off, at a headlong gallop, for the place he had so causelessly quitted, leaving his splendid equipage to follow as it might; and at length when every thing was arranged, although it was late in the evening, he resolved not to lose another minute. Behold him, then. exactly three days from the time he had left the village, driving furiously along the road, in a very elegant travelling-carriage drawn by four horses, and attended by two outriders. The clattering of the horses' hoofs upon the pavement, and the flashing of the lamps, and of the lighted win-dows, as the vehicle rushed along the street of the town from which he took his departure, for some moments carried away his attention from the thoughts that had distracted him; a feeling of gratified pride entered his mind; he felt himself to be a man of consequence, and anticipated with an eager delight the surprise of his former friends, the humiliation of his enemies, and the unmixed happiness of his betrothed love.

But when the light, and noise, and bustle of the town had been left behind, when he was alone and in darkness, and not a sound reached his ear, but the heavy and monotonous tramp of the horses' feet, and the rushing noise of the wheels over the smooth road, the character of his thoughts was changed. Again and again he went over, in his mind, every particular of his short, but important, visit to the village; the anecdotes of the landlord, his rencontre with Clifford's friend, the scene in the wood, all were examined with the most scrupulous nicety. Could it be possible, he asked himself, while a sudden perspiration burst ever his forehead at the terrible imagination, that any unexpected circumstance might occur to hasten the marriage? Could this mysterious stranger, who had forced upon him the history of Clifford, haunted his steps in the wood, and stared at him with his fierce eyes as the carriage drove off from the inn door, have any influence over his destiny; did he suspect who he was—had he witnessed his emotion at the sight of Mr. Stanley's housemight he not have warned his friend of danger -and might not the prompt, bold, sagacious

Clifford have already taken steps to secure himself against interference? Again the image of Emma appeared, sometimes with a reproachful, and sometimes a mournful, look; her pale cheek, where the marks of recent indisposition had been visible, her heavy and sometime with untimely tears; her listless walks, her melancholy voice—all rose upon his fancy like accusing witnesses.

His meditations were interrupted by his postillions suddenly pulling in their horses; a carriage, it appeared, was approaching in the opposite direction, and the night being dark, and the road extremely narrow at this place, it was necessary to be circumspect. He looked out of the window, but for some moments could only perceive the lamps of the other carriage, which was driving with considerable speed. At length as it came nearer, moving more slowly, he observed what seemed to him, in his state of feverish sensibility, an evil omen of the result of his journey-the postillions wore white cockades, and it appeared evidently to be a marriage-party. The two vehicles were now by the side of each other, their wheels grazing slightly as they passed, and Mortimer looked with a natural curiosity into the opposite window, which was open. The look that met his could not be mistaken; it had

startled him on the solitary road—it had glanced on him at the inn-door—and the expression of triumph, mingled half with derision, half with pity, which now shone with a magnificent and fatal lustre in its glance, withered his very soul. Gasping for breath, and catching with convulsive energy at the window-frame, he stretched forward to obtain a view of the bride—their eyes met—a terrible shriek rung in the ears of the wretched Mortimer—a second came more faintly and more distant—and a third was lost in the rushing of the wheels, and the trampling of the horses, as he found himself carried with headlong speed—what matters it whither?

## THE

## NEW-YEAR'S GIFT.

That night, a child might understand,
The de'il had business on his hand.
TAM O' SHANTER.

It was the first night of January, and a more dismal night could not well be imagined. It seemed as if the spirits of the air were keeping holiday on the occasion, and welcoming in the new year with fiendish revelry. The inhabitants of a little hut, on the borders of Ettering forest, were listening, in gloomy silence, to the storm, as they cowered round the dying embers of a fireplace in the middle of the room, or rather in the middle of the house, for their wretched hovel could not boast of more than one apartment. The rain dropping through a gap in the roof, which served the purpose of a vent, had nearly extinguished the damp and scanty faggot; while

the wind piercing through a thousand crevices rendered still more miserable this abode of desolation, which at best was destitute of almost every comfort that distinguishes the dwelling of men from the lair of wild beasts.

Oswald the wood-cutter, the owner of this sorry mansion, was a man of middle age, possessing an appearance of superiority to his present fortunes, which seemed to denote his having seen better days. As he looked for a moment at the care-worn features of her whom he had married for love, a blooming, light-hearted girl, twenty years before, then at his two daughters, just rising up into womanhood, and lastly at the bare mud walls which enclosed them, and the empty cupboard, a groan of bitter agony burst from his heart, and he leaned his forehead on his clenched hands, as if in utter despair.

"For shame, Oswald," said his wife, struggling to appear cheerful, "is this a time to droop. The last year was bad enough to be sure, and, heaven be praised, it is over; but we are now only on the threshold of another—and who knows what may happen before its close!"

who knows what may happen before its close!"

"Ay, who knows," said the youngest girl eagerly, as she stole round to her father, and threw her arms round his neck—" who knows what may happen indeed!—Did not our next-

door neighbour, who lives only two miles off, find-"

Here her voice was drowned in the storm, which broke upon the hut with a sound as if it was tearing up the roof, and the shrinking girl hid her face in her father's bosom, till the fitful blast, which seemed to have arisen in wild mockery of her hopes, died away with a slow and melancholy cadence. The little party listened for some moments in consternation to the ominous sound, till their silence was again broken by the youngest daughter, who, raising her head, continued in a low voice:

"It was gold, father, our neighbour found, last new-year's day, in the ruins of the abbey, and I have heard too," added she, whispering, "of new-year's gifts that did not come by chance!"

"Hark!" cried the females at once, as a sound resembling, in their excited imaginations, a human voice, rose wildly upon the storm.

"For God's sake hush, sister," said the elder girl; "this is no night to talk of gifts like these; poor as we are, we should be none the richer of the fairies' gold."

"Gold!" echoed Oswald, in a melancholy tone, who had for some time appeared buried in a kind of stupefaction, from which neither the

caresses of his favourite child nor the ominous shricking of the storm had power to awaken him,—then raising his head fiercely, while he strained his daughter with convulsive energy to his breast, "If it come but in the shape of gold," cried he, "it should be welcome, from man or fiend!"

At this moment a louder burst of the tempest than had yet been heard, shook the frail tenement to its foundation, and a flash of lightning, unusual at the season, cast a momentary glare around. The cottagers turned their eyes mechanically to the window, and a cry of terror burst from the women, as they saw most distinctly the appearance of a human face looking in upon the solitary group. The father rose from his seat. and disengaging himself rudely from the arms of his daughter, which were clasped still closer round him in the agony of superstitious fear, he took up his hatchet and unbarred the door. As the wind rushed in, it awoke for a moment the sinking flame on the hearth, and Oswald looking back, cast one wild glance on the faces of his wife and helpless girls turned towards him in expectation and alarm, then went out into the night, and left them in darkness and dismay.

An hour passed away that seemed a whole night; sometimes, either in imagination or reality, a distinct cry was heard rising above the storm, and sometimes a momentary silence intervened

that seemed still more pregnant with horrid meaning. To add to their dismay, the fire was now entirely extinguished, and as they sat there in midnight darkness listening to the mysterious voices of the wind, a thousand vague but terrible imaginings crowded into their fancy, thoughts daring and unlawful even to think, and which their lips refused to utter, even to one another, in their companionship of terror. At length Oswald returned; wet, cold, and almost fainting, he threw himself on his comfortless bed; no word escaped his lips; and each of the females shrunk from being the first to question him. As he lay down, however, a sound at that moment more terrible than aught they had yet heard or imagined, smote upon their hearts like the knell of peace and hope; it was the chink of gold;and the shuddering females grasped one another tightly, amidst the darkness, and sinking upon their mattress of rushes, hid their faces in the cover. And so passed on this memorable night, in silence but for the fitful shrieking of the tempest, and in darkness but for the sudden flashes of lightning that sometimes fell with startling brightness on their heavy eyelids, when just closing in a restless and feverish slumber.

The dawn at length arrived. The storm had subsided, the sky was again clear, and the usual sounds of morning were heard on the earth. It

seemed as if the fury of the night had been but a frightful dream, the tempest had rushed by without leaving the print of his footstep, and the face of nature was serene and unchanged. The woodcutter's family, as they felt the fresh air on their faces and heard the accustomed chirping of the Robin, who blesses the roof he touches, rubbed their eyes and looked strangely at one another, half doubting the reality of what had passed.—but Oswald still remained buried in his own gloomy meditations, his cold and stern manner forbidding, more forcibly even than the harshest words, every attempt at enquiry. It seemed as if that one night had effected more than years of care and suffering, and stamped on the firm features of middle life the marks of premature age. His eyes were sunken and spiritless, his forehead was gathered into indelible wrinkles, and his visage appeared sharp and sallow. But there was no want that day of GOLD! nor of the comforts that gold can buy. Another day came, and another,-weeks-months-and still the mysterious hoard was unexhausted.

It would be needless to detail the mistrust and alarm of his wife and daughters at this sudden affluence; or the gradual subsidings of such feelings into acquiescence and satisfaction; it is so easy to reconcile ourselves to what is pleasant, and we are so willing to forget what it

would be painful to remember! At first, indeed, the precious metal seemed to burn their palms when it touched them; and often the girls looked at the bright and heavy pieces, almost expecting to see them change before their eyes into a heap of withered leaves. Meantime, however, though possessed of what they had coveted so much, the cottagers did not become happier or more contented; the walls of their hut indeed kept out the storm, and the rain did not splash through the roof, as heretofore, on their evening fire, their food was palatable and plentiful, and their clothing was warm, and not ungraceful. But there are worse guests than wind or water, and loathing of food is as bad as hunger itself; and with their old stuff gowns, the daughters of the woodcutter laid by the simplicity and evenness of their hearts and tempers. Things in short did not prosper. One of them fell sick, and two months of their good fortune were consumed at her bedside. Then reports of a strange nature got abroad in the neighbouring village respecting their newly acquired wealth; one by one their acquaintances dropped off; the very shopkeepers eyed suspiciously, and seemed to receive with reluctance, the money which they tendered, (this, reader, was not in the nineteenth century.) while the suitors, that might have been attracted. even in the humblest circumstances by the girls'

beauty, kept far aloof from the solitary hut. As for Oswald, his gloom seemed to increase every hour; sometimes he sought a momentary relief from his misery in the bottle, but there was a wildness in his laugh which scared even the companions of his debauchery. He seemed to be set apart from the rest of the world, and totally cut off by some strange destiny from the sympathies of his kind; for the very wife of his bosom, and the children he had loved so doatingly, feared at length to look upon his haggard brow; and shrunk unconsciously from his touch.

The year was now drawing to a close, but not so the distresses of the cottagers; Oswald's temper became daily more fierce, jealous, and in-Even the golden store which he had tractable. at first scattered with wild profusion, as if philosophically sensible of the real nothingness of its value, became now the object of his solicitude, he doled out, with a slow and unwilling hand, what was absolutely necessary for the support of the family, and seemed to look with a grudging eve on every morsel that was consumed at their frugal meal. The flesh seemed to melt gradually from his bones, the spirit forsook his eye, and his limbs were hardly able to support even the light and emaciated body,—till at length, totally exhausted, and sick almost unto death, he became unable to leave his bed.

The reports we have hinted at had sometime before reached a neighbouring convent, and one of the holy brotherhood had frequently attempted, for religious purposes, to acquire the confidence of the wood-cutter, but at this particular juncture he redoubled his efforts; and the last night of this fatal year found him at the bed-side of the repentant and apparently dying sinner. Oswald now unbosomed himself to the holy father for the first time. His confession was made in a low and trembling voice, and his wife and daughters, who had removed as far from the bed as the space permitted, could only perceive the motion of his lips, and the throes of mental agony with which the secret was drawn out from the guilty breast, in which it had lain so long, corroding the whole heart, and turning the springs of life into poison.

"It is impossible," groaned the penitent, in reply to some words of comfort.

"Nothing is impossible with God," replied the father with severity—" but sincere repentance," added he, " can only be proved by restitution."

"Then there is no hope for me," said Oswald, "for the accursed treasure is already spent."

" What, all !"

" All, save one piece," replied Oswald.

"Well," said the father, "that is still some-

thing—famine at least shall not scowl upon your death-pillow, this piece of gold will purchase food for your wife and children for one day longer; and your dying ear will not at the same moment be filled with the complaints of hunger and the sobs of grief."

"O cease this mocking of my wretchedness," cried Oswald, "how cheerfully would I not endure the worst pangs of famine and disease; how gladly bare my dying head to the cold winds I can still hear sighing around us, and the rain that is now falling with such a heavy boding sound upon the roof; how willingly would I not commit the wants of my helpless family to Him who feedeth the young ravens; and oh! with what transport would I not give back this miserable remnant, if I could but hope—"

" Hope all things," said the confessor; " the gold must be returned!"

"Who will come for it?" asked Oswald, shuddering.

"Heaven has its messengers, as well as Hell!" said the priest.

At the instant the casement was slowly and noiselessly opened from without, and a human hand appeared. Oswald rose from his bed and staggered towards the window; he put the piece of gold into the extended hand,—but it was no shadow that met his touch; no cold and ghostly

messenger called up from the rotting sleep of the grave to perform the behests of heaven! A man dressed in the attire which usually distinguished travellers at that period, received the money, and after exchanging a look of deep significance with the giver, shut the casement.
"Thank God! Thank God!" cried Oswald,

"he lives, I am no MURDERER!"

We must not inquire too narrowly whether this was precisely the conclusion to his well-arranged plan for proving the penitence of the wood-cutter, which the good father anticipated. Perhaps he would have thought it more for the credit of his convent, if it could have been believed that the spirit of the man, whom Oswald supposed he had murdered as well as robbed in a moment of desperation twelve months before, had really answered to his call. Indeed, at that period, the story would not have been discredited, even if the treasure had been made the gift of one of those demons with which every forest was then peopled so thickly; it was long, at least, before the three females could dispossess themselves of the idea, that the mysterious fund, which, in place of the comfort and pleasure it is the property of money to purchase, brought only wretchedness and despair, was not actually the New Year's present of some juggling fiend whose voice had decoyed Oswald into the midnight forest. In our less romantic day, however, the evil thoughts of man's own heart are the only fiends that tempt him to destruction; and the wages of his guilt, that dazzle without enriching, are the fairies' gold.

The above story is still told on the borders of Ettering Forest; and the ruins of the woodcutter's hut, remaining to this day, are pointed out as conclusive evidence of its truth.

The tradition farther bears, that Oswald recovered from his illness, and after this terrible lesson, became a better and a richer man, his end, like Job's, being more prosperous than the beginning.

## FISHERMAN'S TALE.

THERE is a village in Scotland called Gourloch, situated on the shore of a fine bay, about three or four miles from the town of Delingburn, and inhabited mostly by fishermen, who let part of their houses in the summer months to people who resort thither for the purpose of bathing.

There is perhaps no other part of Scotland, or of the British Islands, which presents so much richness and variety of scenery. From the summit of a hill of very precipitous ascent, a little way to the east of the village, the view is particularly fine, embracing an extent of country unusual in such situations, where the intervention of mountains commonly shuts in the landscape too abruptly.

It was probably of this spot that the following lines were written, the production of a provincial poet, whose name, if I ever knew, I have now forgotten:

It was a lonely place,-And yet indeed not lonely in its site. For you might see for many miles around The footsteps and the forms of men; beneath Its rocky height, just verging to the left, There slept a gentle bay, whose beach was lined With human dwellings; and the dash of oars, Though all unheard, might be imagined, As glided to and fro the frequent skiff. And to the right, not many miles afar, Enveloped in a misty mantle lay A wider, busier hive of human beings, Like a grey cloud there resting on the earth; From whence had I crept out a wilful bee, To wanton in the air and 'mid the flowers. One truant day. And straight before there flowed A stately river; on whose farther side, Amid the mountains and the vales, were cots Half hidden in the trees, or group'd together In villages bright glancing to the sun. While on the wide majestic stream between, Haply from Indian seas or other climes Far off and strange, with slow and haughty pace, Frequent some gallant ship her destined home Approached, in triumph and in beauty. Within my mind, were linked and blended there The feelings of our nature, human joys And woes, and all sweet kindred sympathies, With the deep thoughts and feelings that do fill The silent air, and dwell amid the mountains, And are shower'd down upon th' illumin'd soul From the bright skies.

When descending one day, during my visit to the west country, from this commanding spot, I sat down, wearied with the exertion, on a huge

isolated rock, near the narrow path by which alone the hill is accessible. On the stone was inscribed in rude characters the words. ' Rest and be thankful!' which I felt to be exceedingly appropriate. Presently an elderly man of a grave aspect, and a maritime appearance, winding slowly up the hill, came and sat down near me on the rock. I guessed him to be one of the better class of fishermen from the village, who had purchased, with the toil of his youth and his manhood, a little breathing-time to look about him in the evening of his days, ere the coming of the night. After the usual salutations, we fell into discourse together, and I found him to be a man who had looked well about him in his pilgrimage, and reasoned upon things and feelings-not living as the brutes that perish.

After a pause in the conversation, he remarked, as I thought in somewhat a disjointed manner, "Is it not strange, Sir, the thoughts that sometimes come into the brain of man, sleeping or waking,—like a breath of wind that blows across his bosom, coming he knows not whence, and going he knows not whither,—and yet unlike the wind, that ruffles not the skin it touches, they leave behind them an impression and a feeling, and are as things real and authentic, and may become the springs of human action, and mingle in the thread of human destiny!"

"Strange," said I, "indeed! It has been my fortune more than once to be a witness of occurrences, which brought home to me reflections of that nature, with a solemn earnestness I sought to turn aside; but it seems to me that your remark, though of a general nature, must have been made in mental reference to some particular thing, and I would fain crave to know what it is."

"You are right," said he, "I was thinking at the moment of something which has sat, for many days past, like a mill-stone on my mind; and I will tell it to you with pleasure."

So I edged myself closer to him on the stone, that I might hear the better, and without more preamble the Scottish fisherman began his story, as nearly as I remember, in the following words:—

About six months ago a wedding took place in our village, and a more comely and better looked-on couple never came together. Mr. Douglas, though the son of a poor man, had been an officer in the army, an ensign, I'm thinking; and when his regiment was disbanded, he came to live here on his half-pay, and whatever little else he might have. Jeanie Stuart, at the time, was staying with an uncle, one of our folk, her parents having been taken away from her; and made up for her board as far as she could, by

going in the summer season to sew in the families that came out then like clocks from the holes and corners of the great towns, to wash themselves in the caller sea. So gentle she was, and so calm in her deportment, and so fair to look on withal, that even these nobility of the loom and the sugar-hogshead thought it no dishonour to have her among them; and unknowingly, as it were, they treated her just as if she had been of the same human mould with themselves.

Well, they soon got acquainted, our Jeanie and Mr. Douglas, and the end of it was, they were married. They lived in a house there, just beyond the point that you may see forms the opposite angle of the bay, not far from a place called Kempuck-stane, and Mr. Douglas just employed himself, like any of the rest of us, in fishing, and daundering about, and mending his nets, and such-like. Jeanie was now a happy woman, for she had aye a mind above the commonalty; and I am bold to say, thought her stay long enough among those would-be gentry, where she sat many a wearisome day, and would fain have retired from their foolishness into the strength and greenness of her own soul.

But now she had a companion and an equal, and indeed a superior; for Mr. Douglas had seen the world, and could while away the time in discoursing of the ferlies he had seen and heard tell of in foreign lands, among strange people and unknown tongues. And Jeanie listened and listened, and thought her husband the first of mankind. She clung to him as the honey-suckle clings to the tree; his pleasure was her pleasure -his sorrow was her sorrow, and his bare word was her law. One day, about two weeks ago, she appeared dull and dispirited, and complained of a touch of the head-ache; on which Mr. Douglas advised her to go to-bed, and rest herself awhile, which she said she would do; and having some business in the village, he went out. On coming back, however, in the forenoon, he found her just in the same spot, leaning her head on her hand; but she told him she was better, and that it was nothing at all. He then began to get his nets ready, saying he was going out with some lads of the village to the deep-sea fishing, and would be back the next day. She looked at him long and strangely, as if wondering at what he was doing, and understanding not any thing that was going on. But finally, when he came to kiss her and bid her good-bye, she threw her arms round him, and when he would have gone, she held him fast, and her bosom heaved as if her heart would break-but still she said nothing.

"What can be the matter with you, Jeanie?" said Mr. Douglas.

"Stay with me to-day!" said she at last, "depart not this night—just this one night—it is not much to ask—and to-morrow I will not be your hinderance a moment."

But Mr. Douglas was vexed at such folly, and she could answer nothing better to his questions than that a thought had come into her head, and she could not help it. So he was resolved to go. and he kissed her, and threw his nets on his shoulder, and went away. For some minutes after, Jeanie stood just on the same spot, looking at the door where he had gone out, and then began to tremble all over like the leaf of a tree; at length, coming to herself with a start, she knelt down on both knees, and throwing back her hair over her forehead, turned her face up towards heaven, and prayed with a loud voice to the Almighty, " that she might still have her husband in her arms that night." For some moments she remained motionless and silent, in the same attitude, till at length a sort of brightness, resembling a calm smile, passed over her countenance, like a gleam of sunshine on the smooth sea, and bending her head low and reverently, she rose up. She then went as usual about her household affairs, and appeared not any thing discomposed, but as tranquil and happy as if nothing had happened.

Now, the weather was fine and calm in the

morning, but towards the afternoon it came on to blow—and indeed the air had been so sultry all day, that the old sea-farers might easily tell there would be a racket of the elements before long.

As the wind, however, had been rather contrary, it was supposed that the boats could not have got far enough out to be in the mischief, but would put back when they saw the signs in the sky.

But in the mean time the wind increased, till towards night it blew as hard a gale as we have seen in these parts for a long time; the ships out there at the tail of the bank, were driven from their moorings, and two of them stranded on their beam-ends, on the other side; every stick and stitch on the sea made for any port they could find; and as the night came on in darkness and thunder, it was a scene that might gow even the hearts that had been brought up on the water, as if it was their proper element, and been familiar with the voice of the tempest from their young days. There was a sad lamenting and murmuring then among the womenfolk,-especially them that were kith or kin to the lads on the sea; and they went to one another's houses in the midst of the storm and the rain, and put in their pale faces through the darkness, as if searching for hope and comfort,

and drawing nearer to one another, like a flock of frightened sheep, in their fellowship of grief and fear. But there was one who stirred not from her home, and who felt no terror at the shricking of the night-storm, and sought for no comfort in the countenance of man-and that was the wife of Mr. Douglas. She sometimes indeed listened to the howling of the sea, that came by fits on her ear like the voice of the water-kelpie, and starting, would lay down her work for a moment-but then she remembered the prayer she had prayed to Him who holds the reins of the tempest in His hands, and who says to the roaring waters, "Be still," and they are still-and of the glorious balm she had felt to sink into her heart, at that moment, of high and holy communion, even like the dew of heaven on a parched land. So her soul was comforted. and she said to herself. God is not a man that he can lie, and she rested on his assurance as on a rock, and laughed to scorn the trembling of her woman's bosom-for why? The anchor of her hope was in heaven, and what earthly storm was so mighty as to remove it! Then she got up and put the room in order, and placed her husband's shoes to air at the fire-side; and stirred up the fuel, and drew in the arm-chair for her weary and storm-beaten mariner. Then would she listen at the door, and look out into the night for

his coming, but could hear no sound, save the voice of the waters, and the footstep of the tempest, as he rushed along the deep. She then went in again, and walked to and fro in the room with a restless step, but an unblanched cheek. At last the neighbours came to her house, knowing that her husband was one of them that had gone out that day, and told her they were going to walk down to the Clough, even in the mirk hour, to try if they could not hear some news of the boats. So she went with them, and we walked all together along the road, it might be some twenty or thirty of us; but it was remarked that though she came not hurriedly nor in fear, yet she had not even thrown her cloak on her shoulders to defend her from the night air, but came forth with her head uncovered, and in her usual raiment of white, like a bride to the altar. And as we passed along, it must have been a strange sight to see so many pale faces, by the red glare of the torches they carried, and to hear so many human wailings filling up the pauses of the storm; but at the head of our melancholy procession there was a calm heart and a firm step, and they were Jeanie's. Sometimes indeed she would look back. as some cry of womanish foreboding from behind would smite on her ear, and strange thoughts would crowd into her mind; and once she was

heard to mutter-if her prayer had but saved her husband to bind some other innocent victim on the mysterious altar of wrath! and she stopped for a moment, as if in anguish at the wild imagination. But now, as we drew nearer the rocks where the light-house is built, sounds were heard distinctly on the shore, and we waved the torches in the air, and gave a great shout, which was answered by kent voices-for they were some of our own people, and our journey was at an end. A number of us then went on before. and groped our way among the rocks as well as we could for the darkness: but a woeful tale met our ear; for one of the boats had been shattered to pieces, while endeavouring to land there, and when we went down they were just dragging the body of a comrade stiff and stark from the sea. When the women behind heard it there was a terrible cry of dismay, for no one knew but it might have been her own brother or son; and some who held torches dropped them for fear, trembling to have the terrors of their heart confirmed. There was one, however, who stood calm and unmoved by the side of the dead body. She spoke some words of holy comfort to the women, and they were silent at her voice. She then stepped lightly forward, and took a torch from the trembling hand that held it, and bent down with it beside the corpse. As the light

fell one moment on her own fair face, it showed no signs of womanish feeling at the sight and touch of mortality; a bright and lovely bloom glowed on her cheek, and a heavenly lustre burned in her eye, and as she knelt there, her long dark hair floating far on the storm, there was that in her look which drew the gaze even of that terrified group from the object of their doubt and dread. The next moment the light streamed on the face of the dead—the torch dropped from her hand—and she fell on the body of her husband.

Her prayer was granted. She held her husband in her arms that night, and although no struggles of parting life were heard or seen, she died on his breast.

## THE

## GUARDIAN.

THE village of Arlivale is one of the most pleasantly situated in the north of England; and the eye of the traveller, as he is whirled along the great road on the vexatious business of the world, rests with delight on its neat white-walled cottages and humble spire, which are seen for a moment through the vista, opened by its rustic approach among the trees. A small stream which winds along the valley, sometimes lost among the shrubs that love to bend over the water, drinking life and beauty from its cool bosom, runs between the rows of houses; and, here and there, wooden bridges of the most rustic architecture, serve to connect the opposite banks in neighbourly communication. The church

stands at a short distance on the side of the hill, and is only a larger cottage, distinguished from the others by a little tapering spire; around it lies the church-yard, partially shut in by trees, but not the melancholy cypress or the sentinel yew,—a spot where one might indulge in the soft and mournful feelings inspired by the remembrance of lost friends, unchilled by that fanatical austerity which usually dwells among the long homes of mortality, where children might prattle round the small grave of their companion, and old women sit knitting in the sun.

One summer afternoon a traveller descended from the mail-coach, on the highway where it is joined by the road leading to this retired village; and having looked round in vain for the eager porters he had probably been accustomed to find, on such occasions, anxious to prevent his wishes, and then for some loitering rustic who might be induced to act in their capacity, he even submitted to circumstances with what grace he might, and shouldering his portmanteau sturdily, took the way to the cottages. He appeared to be in the very spring of life; his figure was genteel, and even handsome; and his quick, bright eye, elastic step, and open carriage, bespoke him a youth who had not yet suffered

much in the 'shock of men.' He walked briskly along, sometimes pausing to look round on the singularly beautiful and interesting scene, and sometimes springing from the road upon the higher ground at its side to catch a fuller view, apparently quite insensible of the burthen he carried. Having at length reached the village, he deposited his portmanteau in a cottage, which, by the bunch of ripe grapes painted on the window-shutter, (a hieroglyphic which stands either for cyder or ale,) he conjectured rightly to be the public-house; and after endeavouring with a painful politeness to swallow a second mouthful of the atrocious compound, exhibited to the traveller, under the latter denomination. by village publicans whether of the north or south of England, and enquiring his way further, he proceeded on his devious journey. Now he would forsake the path to get a nearer view of the stream, examining, with an angler's eye, the depth of its pools, and the ripple on its surface; and then ascend the hill-side in an opposite direction, to enjoy the contrast between the warm rich valley winding at his feet, and the grey mountains of Westmoreland in the distance. He walked round the church, peeped into the windows, read all the inscriptions that were legible on the tomb-stones; and after the fashion of travellers, copied one of them into his pocketbook, as a specimen of the provincial poetry, which ran thus,

Here lieth one
Who after her work done,
Now sleepeth in the sun;
Her children too are nigh,
And to their father cry,
Who is left alone to sigh.

then below in fresher letters, dated a few years after,

Lo! already here am I.

J. M. Feb. 22, 1790.

The next object that attracted his attention was the curate's house a little further on. There was nothing about this humble dwelling which did not thoroughly harmonize with the primitive simplicity of the others; but the hand of taste was so visible, even in its most rustic arrangements, that it would have been impossible to mistake it for the abiding-place of an ordinary villager. No one was stirring about the house, not a voice was heard, and the stranger indulged his idle curiosity at leisure. At length he wandered round to the back of the little garden, and mounting on the stump of a tree which had been cut down, leant over the paling to enjoy the sweet breath of the flowers which had assailed him with their

tempting richness at many yards distance. He had been some moments in this position, when his eye was caught by an object, which, though beautiful and natural in itself, made him start. It was a female face. In the shady recess of a little rustic bower, a girl, apparently of seven-teen or eighteen, sat looking with a quiet wonder at the intruder; he felt himself in rather an awkward situation, not having even so fair an apology as herself for his unceremonious curiosity, as she must have seen from his embarrassed stare, when their eyes met, that he was unconscious of any one being near. It was necessary, however, to say something, and he enquired, with a sudden effort, whether he was in the road to Melbourne Castle? The fair damsel of the bower had apparently been much amused by the expression of his countenance; but this question from one who, at the instant, seemed to be climbing into her father's garden, was quite too much, and after a vain essay at the demure, she laughed heartily. The stranger at first stared wider than ever, but soon joined in her mirth, and in a few moments felt himself as intimate as after half a dozen years' acquaintance.

"The fact is," said he, "I was on my way to the Castle, but struck with the beauty of this delicious little retreat, I thought I would just take the liberty of peeping." "But if you had knocked at the door," interrupted the light-hearted damsel, "you might have peeped and welcome; without running any risk either of breaking your bones, or being scared out of your wits."

The stranger then, evidently from a desire to prolong the conversation, made some enquiries respecting the inhabitants of the Castle, whither he was proceeding, but her answers afforded him hardly any information.

" Indeed," said she, " we know nothing whatever about them, although so near neighbours; Sir Oswald himself has not been so much as seen for many years: his walks are confined to his own garden, which is completely shut in from outward observation, and to the deserted halls of the old castle; through which I can fancy him stalking, with that grand form, and noble though melancholy look, I once caught a glimpse of, more like the shade of one of his ancestors, than living and breathing man. If you are destined," continued she, "although the admission of a visitor would form a new era in the modern history of the Castle, to pass a long time within its gloomy walls, I pity more than envy vou."

"I trust," replied the youth, bowing gallantly at the same time, " that my stay in this charming neighbourhood will not be a short one—but

that does not depend on myself. I received, some days ago, Sir Oswald's commands to attend him in what he believed to be his last illness; and although a second letter, on the same day, brought me intelligence that he was so much better, as to be out of danger, yet having made all my little preparations, even to the taking my seat in the mail, I determined to indulge the inclination I have felt for many years past to visit Arlivale.—You have possibly heard," continued he, not unwilling to embrace the opportunity of introducing himself more formally, "that Sir Oswald, although without children, is not altogether free from incumbrance; he is my guardian—"

"Indeed!" said she, "you are then Edmund—I beg your pardon—Mr. Egerton." And pity, or some other graver feeling than had yet stolen over her happy features, seemed to mingle with curiosity in the earnest looks she now directed to the young man. The kind of melancholy interest which her countenance expressed was easily accounted for.

The story, associated with his name, was a very sad one. His father, then a gay and fashionable young man, although of small fortune, while on a visit to Italy, which he made in company with his friend Sir Oswald Melbourne, had fallen in love with a young Florentine lady, to whom

he was privately married. Some time after, while as yet their union was kept secret, he became a victim, as was supposed, to the treacherous cowardice of some Italian rival, and was found murdered under his wife's window. The unhappy lady did not survive the shock: she was prematurely delivered of a child, and after imploring, with her last words, the protection of Sir Oswald for the helpless being she had brought living into the world, died, at the early age of eighteen. Sir Oswald attended faithfully to the trust reposed in him; he carried the orphan to England, and being unmarried placed him in a clergyman's family where he could have every advantage of education and society. From that moment, however, he himself appeared to labour under a gloom, that time seemed to increase rather than diminish. The tragical fate of his friend had, no doubt, contributed to effect the change perceptible in his appearance and pursuits, and in the whole character of his life; but this was not sufficient to account for the extreme depression into which he sunk so suddenly; and it was accordingly hinted by those who were supposed to be good authority on the subject, that his was not only the sorrow of bereaved friendship, but of disappointed love, and that, ignorant of his friend's marriage, he had entertained a passion for the same object.

The offspring of this unhappy union, when he grew up to years of reflection, although sometimes a shade of melancholy feeling passed across his mind, as he thought of the circumstances of his birth, was by no means of a character to permit its indulgence to become habitual; and in the bold, frank, careless youth who was now before her, the young lady could with difficulty recognize that solitary and forlorn being her fancy had so often pictured. Having at length succeeded in identifying him with the orphan of Florence, the curate's daughter, for this was her degree, invited him to go into the house by a more legitimate entrance than the one he had seemed to meditate; but the shades of evening were already stealing on, and he was obliged reluctantly to deny himself the indulgence. Requesting permission however to consider the invitation still in force, and secretly resolving to avail himself of it, the very first opportunity, he proceeded on his way to the Castle.

The road now entirely forsook the banks of the stream which runs through the valley, and verged towards the hills. The scenery gradually assumed a different aspect; the patches of cultivated land became more thinly spread; in place of the luxuriant grass that had hitherto carpeted the ground, wherever the plough and the harrow permitted, was now only bare, sun-burnt turf,

and this in turn became speedily covered with brown heath, as the path led farther up the hill. At length our traveller gained the highest point of the road, and turned for a moment to take a parting view of the valley, before it should be altogether hidden. Its rich luxuriance and diversified aspect were strongly in contrast with the appearance of the country, in the direction towards which he was journeying; and when finally turning his back on the peaceful cottages of Arlivale, with their little orchards, and their variegated fields of every hue, from the deepest green to the palest yellow, it was with a chilling, uncomfortable sensation he bent his eyes on the region that lay stretched in gloomy tranquillity before him. Hills rose over hills in endless and indefinite succession; the same objects, with scarcely a variety of form, presenting themselves on all sides; hardly a trace of cultivation was visible in the whole landscape, and except where the dying day-light fell faintly on one or two nameless tarns in the distance, the eye was altogether unrelieved. On a nearer approach to the place of his destination, the barren samenesses, which appeared to be the natural character of the landscape, seemed to have yielded in some measure to the efforts of human ingenuity and industry. A few cultivated fields were observed in the more favourable spots, bounded by inclo-

sures of loose stones, which seemed not so much the termini of individual property, as lines to mark where the point of indomitable sterility commenced. Then two or three cottages appeared on the line of road, about eighty or a hundred vards from each other; and lastly, on turning the angle of a hill which stretched down with a precipitous sweep, and then stopped abruptly, overhanging the path with its projecting crags, Melbourne Castle presented itself to the traveller. . It was a large gloomy-looking building, without any thing of that picturesque and romantic appearance which captivates the eye of the painter; it seemed to have been built entirely with a view to strength, and from its situation must at one time have been the key to the country beyond. It was not yet dark, but two or three lights were distinctly visible in the windows, and Edmund, fearing that his visit might be deemed intrusive at so late an hour, regretted having dallied so long with the curate's daughter. In fact, as he approached nearer the house, many painful and disagreeable thoughts occurred to him. He had never seen his guardian since his childhood; as his father's friend, as the only human being whose name was in any way associated with that of his parents, he had always felt disposed to love and reverence him; but this feeling had never received the slightest encouragement.

Indeed, in the correspondence which had passed between them, there seemed to be a studied coldness on Sir Oswald's part, which, whether intended so or not, had all the effect of repressing the confidence of affection. Many of his guardian's letters it is true appeared to be dictated by the most earnest desire for his welfare; but this was rather evident from the trouble taken by the writer to arrange his ideas on the subject treated, and impart methodically the advice and instruction he was to give, than from any expressions of endearment or regard, that count so high in the estimation of young persons. Edmund's parents were never so much as alluded to, not the slightest information with regard to his fortune or expectations was given, or could be gathered by the most distant implication; and even his direct questions on this subject, when at length he summoned courage to propose them, were passed over in silence.

But what galled the young man more than any thing else, and at length led him to form a determination to seek his guardian's presence and learn from him personally his real situation in the world, was the style and tone of some other letters which, during Sir Oswald's occasional indispositions either of body or mind, were written in his name by a person who seemed by turns to be secretary, servant, and steward. This anoma-

lous character, who signed himself "Walter Malison," had incurred the cordial dislike of Edmund from his very first letter; the mixture of cringing meanness, vulgar familiarity, and upstart arrogance inspired him with so much loathing, that at last he fancied he could tell instinctively by the very touch whether the letter he was about to open had been traced by Sir Oswald or his servant, although they were all directed alike by the latter. As Sir Oswald became more unwell, the letters were all in the hand-writing of Malison, although partly dictated by his master; and it became curious to observe the sudden transitions both in style and matter existing in the same page, where one sentence displayed the elegant and easy diction of a well-educated gentleman, and the rest the awkward periods of an ignorant menial. It was some hasty and half-legible words in Sir Oswald's own hand, that entreated him to set out for the Castle immediately on receiving the letter; but before it was possible for him to start, a despatch from Malison, couched in the most insolent and contemptuous terms, informed him as Sir Oswald was better 'his presence was not wanted.' Edmund, boiling with indignation, tore the letter in pieces, and the same evening set out on his journey.

Musing on his own singular situation, and

hardly knowing whether to blame the weakness, or compassionate the necessity, which compelled Sir Oswald, in his infirm state of health, to entrust the management of matters, even of trivial moment, to so unworthy an instrument, he reached the Castle. He had before perceived that the building was still, as in former times, defended by a moat of no inconsiderable breadth, excepting at the back part, which was secured by the garden wall, but he was quite unprepared for finding the drawbridge up, and every thing secured with the same scrupulous exactness that might have been expected in the days of the border wars.

After some moments spent in deliberation, he began to shout as lustily as possible; but the sound of his own voice, echoed from the walls of the Castle, was the only audible reply. At length, with the irritation which one feels on being baffled in any attempt by an insignificant or ridiculous obstacle, he was just about to turn on his heel, and retrace the path to the village, when his eye was suddenly caught by an object which in his present embarrassment invited inspection. It was an iron ring appended to one of two thick posts which stood, as if intended for the side of a door-way, at the point where the drawbridge descended; and on nearer inspection he was soon able to perceive a light chain carried

across the moat, and apparently communicating with the Castle.

Rejoiced at this discovery, yet hardly knowing in which way it was to become serviceable. he pulled the ring with all his might; when a large bell on the opposite side sent forth a larumpeal that made the hills ring again. Startled at the sound, and condemning his own hasty violence, he waited in some anxiety the result. A window above the house-door was at length opened, and a voice demanded, in no agreeable tone, what was the matter. Edmund mentioned his name, and added, that it was by Sir Oswald's request he had come; he might have spared his words, however, for no sooner had his name escaped his lips than the window was shut down with a sudden violence, which shivered some of the glass, and he could distinctly hear its crash as it fell upon the ground below. minutes then elapsed, and the indignant youth's hand was once more upon the ring, when the door slowly opened, and the drawbridge, with a celerity probably unknown in the days when such things were in fashion, came noiselessly While Edmund passed across, he had a moment to observe the person who stood at the door to receive him.

He was a middle-aged man, low in stature, and of a very slight but not ill-formed figure; in appearance he seemed to be about equi-distant from the gentleman and the servant, for, without any of the mysterious something it is as impossible to define as to counterfeit. which distinguishes the former from the other classes of mankind, he had got nothing of that air of habitual readiness so discernible in those who have been long accustomed to menial servitude. As he stood shading from the air with one hand the lamp which he held in the other, its light fell broadly on his face, and discovered features which, though neither mean nor ill-formed taken separately, yet, in the whole, produced an impression rather unfavourable than otherwise. His nose was sharp and small, his lips well formed, but exceedingly thin, and drawn together in habitual compression, which gave him the appearance of unrelaxing effort and anxiety; his brow was low, and drawn into the slight oblique wrinkles towards the nose which are frequently seen in persons either of a penurious or jealous disposition. Edmund perceived as if instinctively that it was Malison who stood before him, and returned the inquisitive and anxious stare of the small grey eyes that were fixed on him as he approached the door, with a look of haughty displeasure.

The reception, however, which he met with from the prime-minister of his guardian was bet-

ter than he expected. There was little warmth or kindness indeed in his greeting, but certainly nothing which bordered on disrespect; he was profuse in regrets that Mr. Egerton had been kept so long waiting, but it was a whim of Sir Oswald, he said, to have the drawbridge up by a certain hour, and so few visitors or travellers coming that way even in the day-time, it was seldom, if ever, requisite to let it down again before the morning. He was particularly solicitous, too, to account for the accident which happened to the window, which, he said, slipped from his hand as he hastily withdrew the bolt that held it, to go down and let in the guest. But through all his apologies and civility Edmund could perceive a concealed chagrin and discontent, which occasionally relieved itself by a growl at an old deaf servant who brought in the refreshments, and who was the only domestic Edmund had yet seen, if that name could not be applied to Mr. Malison himself. At length he was shown to the apartment appointed for his use, and sinking into bed he speedily lost all remembrance of the fatigues of his journey, the ill-humour of Malison, the sunny features of the curate's daughter, and the anxiety with which he looked forward to an interview with his guardian on the following day, in the deep sleep of strong and healthy youth. The

sun shone brightly on the window of his apartment when he awoke in the morning; and bounding out of bed, he threw an eager glance around. It was with changed feelings he contemplated the scene before him, although, in point of fact, its character was little altered by the difference of light and shadow; the same heath-covered hills swelled in gloomy succession before him, and the same barren stillness dwelt on the landscape, when he had carried his eye past the immediate neighbourhood of the castle; but morning is the peculiar season for all the high and happy feelings of youth, of which it is the emblem; it is the hour of the light heart, the sparkling glance, and the bounding step; when the happy are joyful, and the saddest hope for a while

Mr. Malison did the honours of the breakfasttable with abundant politeness, in the absence of
Sin Oswald, who he said was too unwell to leave
his room so early. The dinner-hour at length
arrived, announced by the tolling of a large bell,
which startled Edmund by its hollow and sepulchral sound as he wandered impatiently about the
garden, almost as much as the brisker peal of the
night before. It was evident by the arrangements of the table that Sir Oswald was expected,
and the youth's heart beat quick with curiosity.
The old servant he had already seen stood

motionless near the door, in a splendid livery, his head bent sideways, as he listened with the vague earnestness of conscious deafness; and the butler, a still older man, stood by the side-board, a feeling of official dignity, and the proud remembrance of former glories still struggling with the infirmity of years, and giving an erectness to his figure which did not now belong to it. After some minutes' expectation a door opened at the end of the passage, and approaching steps were heard; the sound, at length, reached the dull ear of the old servant, and he moved to open the room-door wider, but suddenly stopped short and turned away, and the next moment Malison entered-alone. He brought a message from Sir Oswald, regretting politely that the state of his health did not permit him to wait upon Mr. Egerton, but hoping the next day to have that pleasure.

The dinner passed over in silence hardly interrupted by even the common-place civilities usual on such occasions, and Edmund immediately after went out, to ramble among the dark and uninteresting hills which surrounded the Castle. He now longed with the most painful anxiety for the expected interview with his guardian; till this had taken place, it was useless to think, to waste time in idle speculations founded only on conjecture, and swayed about by his own hopes and

fears. His situation was extraordinary. spite of the coolness of his guardian's correspondence, he had, till now, considered him, not exactly in the light of a parent, but at least as a stay, and, if necessary, a protection; to him, his thoughts had been accustomed to revert in all the visionary plans that youth delights to construct, as to a counsellor and a guide; he did not feel himself altogether alone. But it seemed now as if he had been all the while labouring under some delusion; he was a stranger in his guardian's house, treated at best with cold politeness, and denied even an interview with the person he had travelled so many miles to see, and with whom his business was so deeply important. The pretence, too, for this delay was exceedingly flimsy, it having been evident from the manner of the servants, that they were not aware of any illness which could prevent their master's appearance; or if his dining in the public room was not a matter of common occurrence, it became still more certain that on this day, at least, it was intended and expected that he should be present; his very chair had been placed, and arrangements out of the usual routine could not have been made without orders. Was it caprice that made him change his mind? or was it an unwillingness to see him, or desire to put off to the last possible moment an interview that, soon

or late, must be granted? A thousand perplexing thoughts crossed his mind, a thousand ques-. tions presented themselves, and a thousand vague and indefinite suspicions took hold of his imagination. Lost in these unpleasant and agitating reveries, he found himself unconsciously on the ridge from which the evening before he had viewed the beautiful and quiet vale of Arlivale. He could see distinctly the curate's house, the garden, the very bower where the fair and happy girl so accidentally met with, had first opened her eyes on him in amused surprise. He thought of the interest her countenance expressed at the moment he mentioned his name, the instantaneous pity that chased away the smile from her lips, and mellowed almost into tenderness the glance of her bright blue eye. He thought too of the permission he had obtained to see her again; and he was more than ever vexed at not having yet been allowed an interview with his guardian, aware of the strange appearance this might have, and perhaps the degrading impressions it might give rise to, in the minds of the curate and his family. At length, he unwillingly turned his back on a scene which already began to take a prominent place in the reveries he had so much time to indulge, and bent his solitary steps to the castle.

The next day, at an early hour in the forenoon,

he received the wished-for intimation that Sir Oswald desired to see him, although still unable to leave his own room. It was the old butler who brought the message, and slowly marshalled his way through the passages to his guardian's apartment. Large as the house was, Edmund could hardly have conceived that it would take so much time to traverse even its whole length. but probably his own impatience magnified the distance. At last his guide pausing at a door which was partly open, motioned him to enter, and retired with a slow and cautious pace, as if afraid of disturbing a sick person. The room was empty; and Edmund, after waiting a minute or two in expectation, observed another door also partly open at the opposite side, and walking gently towards it in imitation of his guide, pushed it open. Malison stood with his back towards him speaking at the moment in a low, but apparently energetic tone, to some person who sat in a large old-fashioned chair, leaning his head on his hand, his face concealed in the folds of a loose dark-coloured garment, more resembling a cloak, than a morning gown, worn by invalids. The reclining figure waved his hand as if in impatience at what was said, and Malison exclaimed in a louder voice, which reached Edmund's ear just as he was stepping forward,

"What weakness is this—be a man, Sir Os-wald!"

Sir Oswald raised his head at the reproof, and exhibited a countenance whose wan and wasted appearance made the visitor shrink as if in the presence of a spectre. The features were formed in the most perfect regularity, and displayed, as it were, the outlines of manly beauty; but the hollow cheek and sunken eye, and the strange wax-like hue, which is observed in the faces of the dead, gave a ghastliness of expression to the whole, which Edmund could scarcely conceive to belong to a living being.

After pausing for a moment, Edmund went forward, and Malison turned round; a singular agitation appeared in Sir Oswald's manner, who started with even more than the emotion of a nervous invalid at an unexpected intrusion. There was no time, however, to observe minutely his appearance, for the secretary turned his back on his master without ceremony, and came forward to receive the visitor. He appeared pusposely to stand in the same relative position with regard to Sir Oswald and Edmund, which enabled him to act as a screen between them for a longer time than was necessary; at length, he thought proper to move aside, or rather did so to prevent Edmund from pushing past him. Sir

Oswald rose to receive the son of his friend, and displayed the majestic ruins of what must once have been a princely form. He was thin to a degree which Edmund had never witnessed before, save in the last stages of disease, and although his height was broken by an habitual stoop, it still rose above that of most men. He bent his head gracefully to Edmund's salutation, bidding him welcome to the castle, and was then about to sit down, when as if recollecting himself, after a strong effort, he advanced a single pace and extended his hand. As the long fleshless fingers touched those of Edmund, the idea of a dead body again occurred to him, for to the whiteness of snow they added its coldness. The few common-place enquiries and remarks which were made by Sir Oswald at this interview, had nothing in them relative to the business that was nearest his visitor's heart; and indeed the latter now felt all the anger, and pride, and suspicion, he had indulged but a short time before, melt away in unmixed pity.

Malison still remained in the room; and it seemed to Edmund as if Sir Oswald would not have been sorry to dispense with his presence. In this supposition, and willing to let his guardian understand the object of his visit, although with no intention of pressing it at the present interview, he took occasion to say, that

"if he had found Sir Oswald alone, he would have ventured to intrude a few questions relating to his own affairs, on which he was anxious to have some information at his guardian's convenience." Sir Oswald looked at Malison: he seemed on the point of desiring him to withdraw, and Edmund fancied he could even see his hand, which he raised at the moment, begin to make the suitable gesture, when the secretary, although looking full at his master, and of course well acquainted with his meaning, deliberately seated himself on a chair near which he had been standing. Sir Oswald's countenance changed; a slight and momentary colour overspread his pale brow, and raising himself on his elbow, for he had been leaning against the arm of his chair as if from weakness, seemed to be about to say something to Malison, but immediately checking himself, turned a look on Edmund, in which pride might be observed struggling with embarrassment, while he replied that his health was not yet re-established, even so far as it was possible to be, in the worn-out frame that disease had left him; and that business in its present state could not but be injurious,--" I mend every day, however," he continued with a melancholy smile, . which appeared to mock the assertion, " and I promise myself the pleasure of a little of yourcompany very shortly-that is, if you do not

get tired of this dull and barren region, and betake yourself to flight. In the meantime, however, I shall indulge myself, for this day at least, in dining with you.—You know the hour? Can you amuse yourself till then?"

This was said in a tone which, notwithstanding the politeness and cordiality of the words, was meant to end the conference; and Edmund accordingly took his leave, Sir Oswald rising as before, and bowing formally as he withdrew.

The time till dinner was passed by Edmund in speculating on the strange connection which seemed to exist between his guardian and Malison, and in enquiring whether it was likely that any effect would be produced on his own fortunes, by the malice which this retainer very evidently indulged towards himself. At the dinner-hour he found every thing arranged as on the day before; the two servants-and Edmund had not observed another of his own sex in the Castle, the rest of the establishment consisting of only two elderly women and a little girlappeared to have taken even the same place and posture in the room, the butler standing by the side-board with the same effort at the perpendicular, and the old deaf servant with his head bent aside on the identical angle of yesterday. Sir Oswald at length entered, leaning on his secretary. He was dressed in a suit of deep

mourning, the antiquated fashion of which, added to a figure that, although graceful and gentleman-like, from its extreme thinness seemed of more than human stature, together with the wan, death-like appearance of his countenance, gave him a resemblance, in Edmund's eyes, rather to some fanciful portrait that he had seen or imagined, than to a man of this breathing world. Indeed this singular person seemed altogether more connected with the past than the present; his manners, his air, his language, and sentiments, all belonged to a former period, or were fashioned after some ideal model, which had no reference to the present state of the world. On this occasion, however, it was evidently his wish to appear frank, and even cheerful, and to do the honours of his own table in such a manner as to leave no impression on his guest unfavourable either to his politeness or hospitality. In accomplishing this he exhibited a good deal of tact in managing the conversation in the manner requiring fewest sacrifices on his own part; and thus, with little exertion, contrived to avoid the awkward pauses that at such times are apt to throw a damp over a company whose members are little known to each other, or of opposite tastes or interests, and that afford opportunities for suspicion, if any exist, to watch and listen at its leisure. Under the control of this sort of skill, Edmund found himself perforce the only talker in the party, for Malison, in the presence of his patron, notwithstanding the seeming forwardness of his manner in the forenoon, preserved a respectful silence; and even answered to the appeals which Sir Oswald made to him occasionally, as to the localities of the neighbourhood, when their nature was such as to make it sufficient, by the slight bend of acquiescence with which a servant notices the commands of his master. When the questions regarding his studies, manner of life, &c .- or rather the seemingly casual remarks which brought forth the desired information on these subjects—were at an end, and when Edmund, delighted with the unexpected frankness with which he appeared to be treated, was just about to lead the conversation to the story of his parents, and endeavour to procure, from the only person competent to give it, a detail of circumstances he had heard only imperfectly, as a tale in which he had no personal interest; -Sir Oswald rose suddenly, and bidding him good afternoon, left the apartment with Malison. Edmund continued to sit for a short time at the table, reflecting on the strange manner of his guardian, and hardly knowing whether to be pleased or otherwise by his reception.

In a little while he sauntered out to take a solitary stroll, and as before found himself, with-

out enquiring how or wherefore, on the ridge of kills which divided the fertile from the barren part of the country. On this occasion however he strolled farther, and went down into the valley in the direction of the Curate's house. It was his intention to have boldly knocked at the door. as recommended by the fair damsel who had alarmed him so much at his former visit, but the path he had now taken led past the garden near the young lady's bower, and as he approached, the voice of some person singing within attracted his attention. The tones were uncommonly sweet, and the execution tasteful and correct; as he approached closer, he recognised in the fair singer his interesting acquaintance. It was from an eminence on which he had posted himself to reconnoitre, before advancing towards the house, that he made this discovery; which determined him once more to tempt his fate on the paling. As he drew near for this purpose, he stopped suddenly, for a second voice saluted his. ear, as if in conversation with the singer, whose lay was now finished; and although as sweet and harmonious in its kind, it grated unpleasantly on his ear, for it was the voice of a man. He felt a strong temptation, nevertheless, to put his intention of ascending the paling into execution, but he felt that he was not only unauthorized to take such a liberty, but that there would be an

appearance of meanness; if not its reality, in thus placing himself as a spy over the actions of the young lady. Casting behind him, therefore, the fiend curiosity, he went manfully round to the door.

It was singular that it never entered his imagination, that the male voice could have appertained to the Curate himself; this would have been the most likely supposition in the world. but. ' le vrai-semblable n' est pas toujours le vrai;' and accordingly, on entering the house, he found the worthy ecclesiastic snugly deposited in a huge armed-chair, from whence, with closed eyes and open mouth, he emitted ever and anon a note whose heavy and monotonous cadence could not, with any show of justice, be accused of making the slightest approaches to harmony. The entrance of his visitor quickly aroused him from his nap, and probably ashamed of being caught in the fact of sleeping aloud, he began hastily to talk before he had well time to open his eyes. "Well, sir," said he, "how do you like my girl ?"

Edmund stared at the naïveté of this commencement, hardly knowing whether it indicated some singular eccentricity in the clergyman's character, or was meant as a coarse reproof for intruding unintroduced, with a hint that his object was understood; but his stare was returned four-fold by Mr. Warwick, who now rubbed his eyes, and now looked at Edmund, with an expression of embarrassment and indecision which seemed to be produced not so much by his being aware of having made a mistake, as by an actual doubt of his guest's identity. At length however he was apparently able to satisfy himself, and invited Edmund to sit down, addressing him at once by his name. This, at least, was not surprising, as it appeared probable that his daughter might have mentioned their meeting.

. Mrs. Warwick presently made her appearance, and some time after the young lady herself, whom it is time to introduce to the reader as Grace Warwick, the only daughter of the Curate of Arlivale. He was received with the utmost warmth of kindness by the mother, and with a blushing smile by Grace; but the latter had come alone! -who could this person be, who was admitted on terms of intimacy so close as to be alone with her in the dusk of the evening, in a solitary bower-for whose amusement she sung so sweetly and so well-to whom her father, by the coarse question he had unwittingly uttered in his hearing, appeared to offer her as if for sale ?why was he not admitted now? why was not his name at least mentioned as that of a guest who had retired early?

These questions suggested themselves rapidly

to Edmund, and he was for some minutes more occupied in endeavouring to solve the apparent mystery, than in replying to the civilities of his entertainers. By degrees, however, the reverie into which he had fallen wore off, the time flew quickly on; he was charmed with the society he had so accidentally fallen in with—and was charmed too with the happy temper, good sense, and beautiful eyes of Grace Warwick.

It was now getting dark, and he was about to take an unwilling leave, when the thought came across him again of the stranger in the bower; and at this moment an opportunity occurred, which he determined to embrace, of throwing out some hint on the subject.

The cheerful old Curate, willing to detain an agreeable guest as long as possible, proposed a song, and his daughter complied with Edmund's request after only a single denial. The song lackily was the same he had heard from the bower, and Edmund, who was passionately fond of music, almost forgot, in her delicious tones, the object of his sudden jealousy. When she had finished, however, and he had expressed his thanks with warmth and eloquence, he remarked, with a glance directed particularly to herself, that it was just such an air—so deliciously soft and tender—as was fit to be sung by a lady to her lover in a bower at twilight. On the instant

the colour mounted into her face, and her eyes fell beneath his, as if to avoid their inspection: she looked at her parents, who quickly appeared to comprehend her, for coming to her relief as if by one accord, they both levelled at their guest such a battery of questions and remarks, on frivolous or irrelevant subjects, that he was fain to release Grace from his observation, to stand on the defensive for himself. He now rose to depart, perplexed and dissatisfied: he thought for an instant that Grace wished to say something, perhaps in explanation, but she immediately turned away, and he went forth in rather worse humour than he had entered; for to the admiration excited by a beautiful and lively girl, was now added the esteem commanded by the deeper-seated qualities of head and heart, which he fancied had been observable even in this short visit, and these two. if the curious compound, love, were analysed, we believe would be found to form its principal ingredients. The thoughts of Edmund on his way back to the Castle, wandered, by we know not what association, from the Curate's daughter to his own uncertain and solitary situation...

He had before felt impatient to know the exact state in which he stood with regard to the world, and what exertions might be necessary, if any, on his own part to maintain the rank which his education entitled him to assume; but now

his impatience amounted to a feverish anxiety which dreaded the loss of a single hour.

He looked back on the happy circle he had left. and, for the first time, felt himself a desolate and friendless being. He had walked on for some time scarcely knowing whether he was in the proper path, so complete was the darkness of the night; but as he gained the confines of the more mountainous region, the fitful glimpses of the moon, as she emerged from time to time from the thick masses of cloud that were rolling over the sky, enabled him with greater certainty to pursue his journey. When turning round for a moment to watch the effect produced by one of those sudden illuminations on the valley below, he fancied he could observe a figure at some distance following him up the ascent; but the light was just then withdrawn, and he attributed the appearance to some illusion of fancy. He had not proceeded much farther, however, when he heard distinct footsteps behind him, and he now slackened his pace to allow the stranger to come up with him. But the speed of the latter decreased proportionally at the same moment, and Edmund, determined to know the purpose of his pursuer, stood still. The object of his curiosity then approached slowly and silently, and by the light of the moon Edmund could perceive the tall and handsome figure of a man of

middle life, or perhaps rather more. His air and dress, although not distinctly visible, proved him to belong to a higher station than the travellers who might be expected to be met journeying at that time of night along such a road. length reached the spot where Edmund stood. and making a passing remark on the appearance of the night, went on. There had either been something peculiarly striking in the voice he had heard from the bower, or the jealous wakefulness of his ear at the moment must have caused it to make an unusually lasting impression, for in the traveller before him, Edmund at once detected the supposed lover of Grace Warwick. And yet there was something in the tones of the stranger which irresistibly conciliated his good-will, and even commanded respect, for his was one of those voices which to many people recommend their possessor even more than an agreeable physiognomy. In a short time he could observe him hesitate, for a moment, and then go on more quickly; at last he suddenly stood still, till Edmund approached, and addressed him abruptly. "Your's is not the pace, young man," said he, " at which travellers move in the fresh and early stages of their journey; your feet do not bound forward as if their tread was on the soft morning grass of life-what is it that cumbers you? Why are you wearied before the time?" Edmund at

any other time would have been offended by the freedom, or surprised by the singularity, of this address; but its very strangeness accorded so well with the agitated state of his thoughts, the late hour, and the solitary scene, in which any thing in the usual strain of common-place intercourse would have seemed to him flat and unsuitable, that he answered without hesitation,

"Why should my feet bound forward? there is no one coming to meet me—there is no one to encourage me in the race, or to view my progress with pleasure. I have no point before me at which to endeavour, no home to which to hasten. There are clouds before me and around me, and it is not wonderful that I pause like one who has lost his way."

The stranger did not speak again for some minutes, and when he did, his voice was tremulous and low, and there was in it a tone of feeling which thrilled to the very heart of his hearer,—"I know your situation," said he, "I am deeply interested in your fate, I knew your parents—your mother, Edmund—". His voice here was broken with agitation, and after a momentary struggle, he added, "But I can almost forgive her murderer, when I see how well he has performed his part towards her son;—when I see before me in the bodily and mental strength of opening manhood, that motherless and fatherless

infant for whose desolate condition my soul bled so long, and who I believed, till yesterday, had sunk under the cruelty and neglect of strangers."

Edmund gasped for breath; the feelings of natural affection, that had lain dormant so long in his bosom, now gushed at once over his whole heart, "Tell me of my mother!" cried he, grasping the stranger's arm, as if to detain and compel him, "Where was my father when she perished? and I—great God, have I lived so long without avenging her death!"

"Vengeance is mine," said the stranger, "and the hour is at hand. Dare not," he continued sternly, "to assume a right that does not belong to you; confine your suspicions, if any exist, within your own bosom. The secret of your parents' fate is in my keeping, and it will depend on your obedience whether you shall ever know farther. Be silent as you would prosper—and yet be of good cheer, for better days are approaching. Farewell." And so saying, he disengaged himself firmly from Edmund's grasp, and, walking swiftly away in the direction of the valley, was speedily lost in the darkness. Edmund's first impulse was to follow and compel an explanation; but there was something in the deep voice and commanding demeanour of the stranger, that while it invited, or rather extorted confidence on his part, inspired a kind of awe

which repressed any approach at intrusion. Stunned and bewildered, he arrived at the castle. and, as if instinctively, sought his own apartment without being conscious of what he was doing. It was long before he slept, but when he did, the events of the night, with the vague suspicions they excited, arrayed themselves into every terrible form the imagination can conceive. But his leading dreams represented the stranger as the spirit of his father which had come to demand vengeance on his mother's murderer,-for whom he imagined he searched with unavailing eagerness, although his form and face were perfectly familiar. In these, when he awoke and reflected on his sleeping fancies, it was with a superstitious shudder he discovered the tall person, and pale, death-like features, of Sir Oswald Melbourne. The next day he saw nothing of his guardian; but the keen suspicious eye of Malison, who seemed to have observed some change in his manner, pursued him everywhere.

He passed the whole of the evening in wandering about the road between the valley and the castle, in expectation of seeing the stranger, but after waiting till a very late hour, returned wearied and disappointed.

The next day was spent more agreeably, for he dined at the curate's house, and drank fresh draughts of love at the eyes of his daughter.

He purposely remained till a late hour, and walked slowly to the castle, feeling confident that now at length he should fall in with the stranger, when he determined that if mortal power could command it, no cause whatever should prevent him from receiving the information he so eagerly desired. He again arrived, however, without interruption; and resolved that on the following day, whatever might be the consequence, he would force from Sir Oswald. difficult as he was of access, the information he had a right to require from him as his guardian. Indeed, by this time, he almost fancied his extraordinary meeting with the stranger to have been some illusion of a disordered imagination, and the suspicions he had begun to entertain of Sir Oswald, seemed to him at times both improbable and ridiculous. When standing at the window of his apartment which commanded a view of the garden, he was surprised at that late hour to observe two persons apparently proceeding from the house towards the farther extremity. They walked slowly along the path, sometimes standing still for several minutes-at length arriving at the wall where Edmund had remembered there was a door which he had never found open, one of them disappeared, and the other returned towards the house. The latter he discovered, as he approached nearer, to be Malison;

and believing that his companion must have been Sir Oswald, he immediately formed the resolution of joining him in his late walk, and obtaining by force, if not by entreaty, either a satisfactory account of his parents' fate, or a confirmation of the wild and seemingly improbable suspicions, which since his interview with the stranger had been floating through his mind. As he descended the stair-case softly for this purpose, he heard the door which led from the house into the garden shut, and presently Malison appeared at the end of the passage with a lantern. It was Edmund's intention to avoid the secretary if possible, who, if he could not forcibly prevent his following Sir Oswald, might at least be a spy on their proceedings, or perhaps by the strange power he seemed to have acquired over his master, forbid the disclosure he might otherwise be disposed to make. He accordingly shrunk behind a pillar at the termination of the stair-case while he passed. As Malison, with the slow and noiseless step which was habitual to him, went by, the light falling on his face disclosed to Edmund, with a painful distinctness, those suspicious and malignant features which at his first reception at the Castle he had instinctively recognized as those of an enemy. At this moment, however, there was something approaching to pity mingled with his dislike.

Malison seemed an older man than he had at first believed him to be, his features were sharper, his shoulders farther bent, and his small grey eyes wandered from object to object with a feverish restlessness. For an instant it seemed to rest on the spot in which Edmund stood;—he paused, drew his hand over his brow as if to dissipate some bewildering illusion, then stepped forward apparently to throw the light of his lamp on the recess, but suddenly turned away, and ascended the stairs more quickly but as noiselessly as before. When the light had disappeared, Edmund made his way to the door, which he found, as he had expected, only on the latch, probably for the purpose of admitting Sir Oswald when he thought proper to return from his midnight walk. It was just such a night as that on which he had met the stranger, except that now the wind blew cold and gustily; the dark clouds, as they were driven along the sky, mingling in fantastic shapes, at one moment permitted the moon to throw a broad and sudden light upon the garden, and the next shrouded it in almost impenetrable darkness; it was with some difficulty that Edmund in this changing light contrived to preserve the path which led to the secret door. At one time he paused in some perplexity to wait for a re-appearance of the moon, and marvelling much, as the cold wind blew in his face, what

could induce an invalid like Sir Oswald, who secluded himself in his chamber, as he had understood, for weeks together, whether from illhealth or inclination, to choose such a night and such an hour for his solitary walk. His meditations were interrupted by the sound of quick footsteps at no great distance behind him, and conjecturing that he might have been observed by Malison from the castle-windows, as the latter had been by himself, he pushed onward at hazard, determined to have his explanation with Sir Oswald alone. His pursuer was apparently distanced, for by the time he had gained the door, the steps had ceased. It was open, and on entering, he found himself in a labyrinth of trees and shrubs, which he now recognized as a dark uninviting patch of wood, chiefly fir, he had often observed in his walks, and which was dignified by the inhabitants of the castle by the name of 'the forest;' it was not bounded by any wall or fence, except at the garden side, but opened on the wild and desolate hills in the rear of the castle. He had not proceeded far when he heard voices at a short distance towards the skirt of the wood, and on approaching, beheld the object of his search in conference with Malison, who, he knew not how, had reached the place before him.

Sir Oswald stood leaning his back against a tree, his arms folded, and his head raised, as if in the attitude of contemplating the changing phenomena of the sky; the moonlight fell on his pale face, which, now divested of the more studied character he had forced it to assume while receiving and entertaining his guest, displayed a dejection so complete, that every feeling except pity died away in the spectator's bosom.

"Leave me!" said he, in a broken and melancholy voice, "let me at least have one annual night to myself——Have you forgotten the thoughts to which this dreadful night has been consecrated for so many years—"
"I tell you," cried Malison, his voice almost

"I tell you," cried Malison, his voice almost choked with eagerness, "I tell you we are beset! your feet are in a snare—you are girded about as with a net—you are hunted like a wolf into his covert—madman, will you not be persuaded;" he continued, seizing his master by the arm, "Is it not I who tell it you—the faithful and devoted servant who has followed your steps in danger and in flight, in horror and disgrace, in blood and in death? He is in the wood at this moment—Edmund, the avenger of his father."

"Who?" exclaimed Sir Oswald, starting from the lethargy which the first part of this appeal had not been able to dissipate; "But you dream he suspects me not; your fears for your wretched master have misled you. Begone, I would be alone."

A sound, however, at this instant from another part of the wood, like the cracking of a branch, seemed to verify the words of his servant, and Sir Oswald suddenly starting from his recumbent posture, unloosed his cloak, and drawing a pistol from a belt which was fastened round his body, stood erect and resolute.

" For the love of God, let us go," said Malison, " if we gain the garden door we are safe, to remain is death!"

"Let it come!" said Sir Oswald, speaking as if through his clenched teeth; "I have died a living death for more years than I can well remember! But I will not die the death of a dog, after a life-time of concealment and misery to escape it; it shall not be said of the last of my race that he died on a gibbet!"

His form seemed to expand as he spoke; there was now nothing of weakness or decrepitude about him, but on the contrary, his cloak falling off from one shoulder, as he stretched forth his hand in which he held the weapon, gave a fierce and majestic air to his tall figure. Edmund forgot his pity and his admiration; it was no longer the dying invalid who stood before him, but the murderer of his parents, and as Sir Oswald,

after maintaining his posture for a moment, seemed about to comply with the solicitations of Malison, he sprung forward from his concealment—

"Stay, murderer!" he shouted, "It is I, Edmund Egerton, who arrest you in the name of his father's spirit!"

Sir Oswald turned at the voice, and extending his arm, but rather as if warning him away than presenting the pistol; "Stand back," he said, "unhappy youth!—In another cause I would give the last drop of blood in my heart to save yours, but to follow me now is death, did the spirit you would invoke plead for you in visible presence!"

"Shoot him," cried Malison, quivering with rage and impatience, "crush the young serpent to the earth ere he sting you."

Edmund was blind to the danger of contending as he was with an armed man; the long-buried feelings that had since infancy lain dormant but not dead in his bosom, now rose like a sudden flood, which swelled his heart almost to bursting—his mother, his father, stood before him—their cry rose on his ear—their murderer was almost within his grasp! He sprang forward to lay desperate hands on his enemy;—another bound, and his grasp would have been on his throat,—but Sir Oswald levelled his pistol; yet as he did so, uttering a cry more of caution and

pity than of rage, his finger touched the trigger, and in another instant the fatal motion would have been made, when suddenly his arm dropped nerveless by his side, his eyes were fixed in a stare of horror on some object beyond his enemy. and he sunk lifeless, where he stood, upon the ground. Edmund paused in his career, and with a superstitious thrill, turned slowly round, almost dreading to meet the explanation he sought. The stranger stood behind him. His attitude was rather that of one struck motionless himself by some unexpected apparition, than his who has power to cause similar consternation in others; he went slowly forward, without turning his eyes on Edmund as he passed, and knelt down by the side of Sir Oswald; he raised the head of his enemy, and animation returned with the motion;—their eyes met, and they looked long and earnestly on one another. 'Alas, they had been friends in youth!' The stranger gazed on the skeleton features, the corpse-like hue, and the sunken eye of him whom he had once known the gallant and the happy, the noble and the proud, the princely Melbourne-the spirit of revenge he had cherished for so many years, although for grievous, irreparable wrongs, departed like a dream, and they wept on each other's shoulder. Sir Oswald was the first to break silence:

" I feel," said he, " that my hour is almost come; but although guilty-deeply guilty-my pardon must not be granted solely to my wretchedness. You too were to blame; why did you not confide in a friendship which never deceived you? I knew not of your marriage, suspected not that you had a secret too dear for my confidence; I loved your wife without knowing her to be such-madly, doatingly loved her, and with the romance of youthful passion, my errand to her house, on that fatal night, was but to gaze in silence at her window, and in the pale beams of her chamber-lamp, to fancy a faint symbol of that heavenly light which illumined my existence. What were my feelings, when I beheld a manat the dead of night-descend from that window -fondly assisted and caressed in his descent by her—the idol of my worship! What were my feelings when in that man, the destroyer of my fondest hopes-I recognized him whom I had believed to be my bosom friend!-You were unarmed and defenceless, but revenge tramples on the laws of honour as on the laws of heaven -and I plunged my sword into your bosom!" Sir Oswald, overcome with emotion, was unable to proceed for some moments. "I have little more," at length he said, " to relate. Your last groan, as I till now believed it to be, was the knell of my earthly happiness-since then I

have fived a desolate and miserable wretch—haunted within by my guilty terrors, and dogged without by the officers of justice."

"Ha!" cried Egerton, "I understand it now! -the villain Malison, whom I thought your agent and tool, has been your fiend-like master. By his orders I was conveyed, under pretence no doubt to his master of concealing my body, to another quarter of the world. At my return, wife, child, all were gone! After a fruitless search, I went back to the place of my banishment, where destiny, which had taken from me all other riches, rained gold in my hand.----Here I am at last to rest awhile, e'er the close of my pilgrimage, by the side, I trust, of him with whom it was commenced, and to bury the thought of what I have suffered through his rashness, in gratitude for his protection to my helpless child."

The schemes of Malison to acquire the mastery over Sir Oswald's person and fortune, are now too evident to require further developement. In the confusion of the scene he escaped, and was never afterwards heard of.

Mr. Egerton's hopes were realized rather than the gloomy anticipations of Sir Oswald. The Castle was deserted, and a more cheerful abode built in the valley, where the two friends resided during the remainder of their lives Their society was enlivened occasionally by the addition of the worthy Curate and his daughter; in the former of whom Egerton had discovered a college friend, and who had eventually been the means of his tracing his son; and in process of time, the happy smiles of Grace Warwick became the every-day sunshine of the house—for Edmund, as he had found a father, was not long in finding a wife.

FINIS.

BUNGAY:

.

